



Remembrance page 13

St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop

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Currently vacant

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The Messenger

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Uniformed Organisations

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
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| Cubs | Nicky Woodfield | 07932 638 507 |
| Beavers | Jacquie Carn | 7840 823 934 |
| 9th Guides | Lara Kirby | 07961 013 097 |
| 9th Brownies | Wendy Hughes | 962 4580 |

Sundays at St Mary's

9 am Holy Communion
with hymns and prayers

10.30 am Morning Worship
Communion alternate weeks
Band-led worship for everyone.

SHINEon Sundays groups for children aged 0-14 yrs take place during the service on alternate weeks

Explore@4

An informal service open to all and planned for families with pre/primary school children. It takes place on alternate Sundays at 4pm during term time.

Audio recordings of the Sunday sermons can be accessed at any time via the church website.

For full details of services visit the church website and do check before coming as there are occasional variations to this usual pattern.

Weekdays at St Mary's

Contact the church office for more information

Bright Sparks

Baby and Toddler Group
Mondays during term time 2-3.30 pm

Fuel

Fridays during term time 6-7.30 pm
for young people in school years 6-9

Bulb

Alternate Sundays 5.30-7 pm
for young people in school years 7 and up

Connect on Tuesdays

Conversation, coffee, craft in church
10-11.15 am with Communion service to end

Thursday Lunch Club

A hot lunch in the church hall
Please book in advance

St Mary's Singers

Choir at 9am Sunday services
Rehearsals alternate Tuesday evenings - see our website *What's On* calendar

Bellringing

Contact the church office
for more information

Small Groups

Bible study and informal support
Daytime and evening groups

Alpha

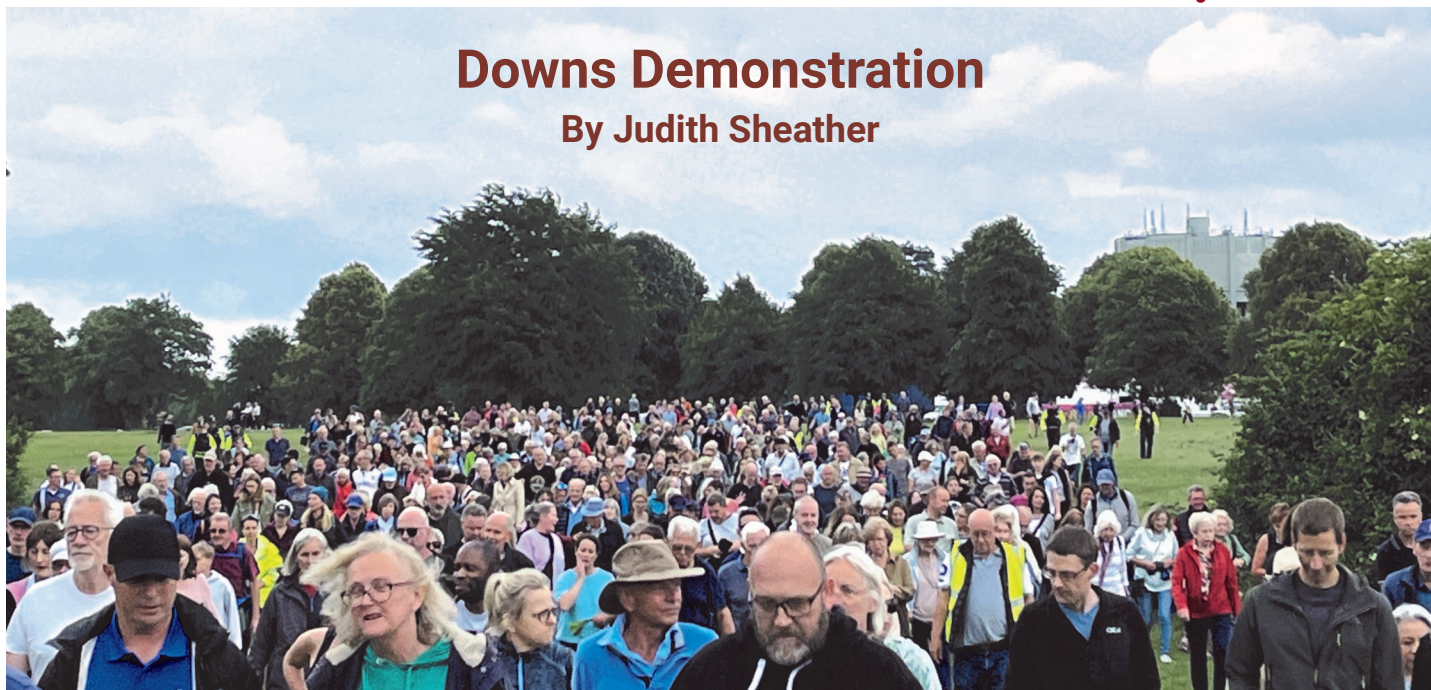
An opportunity to explore the Christian faith
in a small group or 1 to 1

facebook

St Mary Magdalene Church
(@StMarySB)

Downs Demonstration

By Judith Sheather



In the early evening of 12 June, people gathered by the Water Tower for a Show of Support for Protect the Downs campaign. They came from neighbouring areas and further afield to show their concern over the current situation with caravan dwellers.

Spokesperson Tony Nelson addressed the assembled gathering, recalling the generous action of the Bristol citizens who in 1861 saw the passing of the Clifton and Durdham Downs Act to ensure the Downs 'shall for ever hereafter be kept open and unenclosed as a place of public resort'. The Act's preamble observed that the Downs had long been 'used as a place of public resort and recreation'. He reiterated that the issue was not with the van dwellers but with Bristol City Council and their management.

Then the gathering of young people, families, dog walkers, those conscious of the need for safe, clean environment, nature lovers, those less able to walk far and local residents – started their peaceful and respectful walk across Clifton Down to Seawalls, Downleaze and Stoke Hill.



The police estimated the crowds as numbering 800 or more and they were very happy with the well-mannered evening.

A few days after the Demonstration action was taken to hinder vehicle access to the grass. (See picture bottom left). The Council announced that it was looking to provide 250 caravan places by the end of the year.

On 8 July a full Council Meeting discussion was held on this matter following a petition with over 1,000 signatures.

A dedicated project manager has recently been assigned to work 'to ensure that no one is forced to live in unsafe or unsuitable conditions, whether on the kerbside or in informal settlements across the city, including the Downs and to help coordinate this across relevant departments such as housing, transport, and public safety. This manager will also support clearer communication with residents and other departments about the policy's progress.'

Jema Ball, Vicar of St Mary's, writes:

I am in conversation with other local church leaders about this matter and we are all aware of the complexities of the situation on the Downs. As well as encouraging Bristol City Council to take steps which are in the best interests of everyone concerned, we are also keen to promote positive dialogue between local residents and van dwellers. When we read the accounts of Jesus' life, it's clear he loved to meet people where they were, he listened to people's stories and found ways to connect with individuals in order to show everyone God's love.

If you would value the opportunity to engage in open, peaceful, curious conversation with people whose lives are very different from your own, please contact me and we could explore how best to facilitate this.

Stoke Bishop Primary School

As we come to the end of another school year, it's been a truly special summer term at Stoke Bishop Primary - one filled with celebration, reflection, and community.

The children have been involved in a huge variety of experiences that reflect not only our rich curriculum but also our strong school values. From sports day and musical performances to local history learning, our pupils have truly shone.

Year 3 and 4 enjoyed a local WWII enrichment day at Stoke Bishop Village Hall, hearing stories from residents and deepening their understanding of the past. Our older pupils in Years 5 and 6 took part in an advocacy trip to the Downs, working with the Friends of the Downs to care for and learn about our local environment - a powerful example of our children living out the value of stewardship. Others volunteered at community events, such as Bright Sparks toddler group and the St Mary's Connect group, or visited local care homes. Year 6's had their week-long residential to Morfa Bay Activity Centre in Wales and a farewell BBQ.

The school was buzzing with creativity during the end-of-year musical production *Madagascar*, led by our Year 5 and 6 pupils. Their energy, teamwork and joy were on full display, and the performances were an absolute highlight for families, friends and staff alike.

The school has welcomed new families into Reception through 'Meet the Teacher' sessions and home visits. Current pupils took part in transition days - a gentle and encouraging way to prepare for their next step in school. Families were able to reflect on their child's progress through Learning Meetings, and we were thrilled to share the fruits of everyone's hard work with end-of-year reports and assessment results.

A special mention must go to one of our former pupils, who took on a personal challenge of 1,000 skips a day in aid of the North Bristol Foodbank - an inspiring example of compassion in action.

The Summer Fayre raised an incredible £4,300 to enrich children's experience, thanks to the hard work of the PTA and the generous support of our wider community.

As always, none of this would be possible without the dedication of our staff and volunteers and support of school families. This term we also say goodbye and thank you to several staff members, including some long-standing members of the team. Their faithful service to the school over the years has left a deep and lasting legacy. We give thanks to St Mary's Church and to God for another year filled with learning, laughter and love. Please continue to keep our children, families, and staff in your prayers as they begin the new school year.

Darren Hunt (Co-Headteacher)

It's a privilege and a joy to work in this school: This term I've led a series in Collective Worship on the meaning of the Lord's Prayer and taken some lessons within the RE Curriculum helping Year 1 and 2 children to understand Christian worship. We welcomed all the Reception children to St Mary's to have fun exploring the building as Church Detectives.



St Mary's hosted a fantastic Art Exhibition of work from 12 local schools, including Stoke Bishop Primary, in July. Children came into church with their classes during the day; others came after school with their families. Here are some of the children's comments:

"It is amazing and it made me smile seeing everything."

"I liked it when everyone does a little bit and it goes together to make a detailed picture."

"The church was full of beauty!"



We have said goodbye to Mr David Forrester, Co-Headteacher, as he retires. The school is in the safe hands of Mr Darren Hunt and Mrs Vickie Melton, the senior leaders now heading up the staff in this new academic year.

To find out more about how you can support this wonderful school on our doorstep, do contact me, or get in touch with the school directly.

Revd Jema Ball

The Stoke Bishop Village Hall Team

By Peter Weeks



In the last issue of the Messenger you may have read the history of Stoke Bishop Village Hall on Stoke Hill, one of the most recognisable buildings in our area, 140 years old and still going strong. This time I want to tell the story of the team behind the building today.

The owner of the Hall is Bristol City Council. Back in 1885 the Council acquired the land for it to be built; a far-sighted move at a time when Stoke Bishop was not even part of Bristol. Today, however, the Council does not play any part in managing the Hall. Since 1973 it has been leased to Stoke Bishop Community Association and it is managed day-to-day by a volunteer committee. I spoke with this team to find out more.

The Chair of Stoke Bishop Community Association is Peter Clough. Other members are Sharon and Richard Parsons, Joe Scaife and Dan York, all local people who share the work. Sharon manages the bookings and facilities in the Hall while Richard looks after the building. An older listed building like the Hall brings challenges when it comes to maintenance and renovation. The tile-hung exterior to the upper floor was renewed 10 years ago. Now the roof is in need of full retiling; no small job and made harder by having to use the correct kind of replacement clay tiles, so grants have to be found to pay for this. Joe Scaife is the Treasurer dealing with income, expenditure and the accounts. Dan York is the Social Secretary who organizes an annual Christmas party.

In recent years much work has been done on the interior of the Hall. All the rooms have been completely redecorated and new heating and sound systems installed. Today the building looks better than ever. An information panel in the lobby tells the history of the Hall, how it came to be built and all its various uses over time.

Two other important people are Gail Mitchell, who tends the flower bed in the courtyard and replants the flowers outside the front door, and the Hall caretaker Gustav Szenderak. Gustav has an interesting history. He was born 66 years ago in a small town in Slovakia. He studied mechanical engineering, and after army service and working as a plumber, he came to Bristol. He has been working at the Village Hall since 2009, always keeping the building clean and tidy.

Like many public buildings the Hall had to close during the Covid pandemic, which meant a huge drop in income, but things are now back to where they were before the closures. Every week a wide variety of clubs and organisations use the Hall during the daytime and evenings. Tai chi, a choir, bridge groups, Pilates, art classes, dog training, dancing ... something for everyone. At weekends the Hall is available to hire for one-off events. The Community Association is a registered charity so all income goes towards maintenance and running costs.

We are fortunate to have such a strong team looking after this beautiful and useful public building on our behalf.

Stoke Lodge Update

In the 15 year rollercoaster of the Stoke Lodge journey, we have certainly travelled over some bumps. Recently, the High Court handed down a judgment that came as a shock to all concerned, ordering that Stoke Lodge should not remain registered as a village green. He also ruled that the community should pay 90% of the agreed costs. But in the face of adversity, our community has yet again shown its strength, support and determination to protect this precious green space for generations to come. We have been absolutely overwhelmed by the response. The court's decision does not affect the four public rights of way across Stoke Lodge. Once these are added to the Definitive Map, they will ensure continuing public access to this beautiful and historic open space, regardless of village green status.

Helen Powell

43rd Bristol Scouts Community Centre Build Update

Our build continues to make good progress and by the time you read this we should be working on the inside of our new Scout Community Centre.

At we go to print (mid-august) the steel frame has been installed and the walls are being built, so we can finally see the shape of the new building. Exciting times!

We remain so grateful to everyone who has supported us over 10+ years of fundraising and we are looking forward to moving in soon, but in the meantime we are still raising funds for fit-out and kit-out items to make this a new home for young people, as well as creating a great space for local events and groups.

We still need to fund a kitchen, bathroom items, storage, external landscaping for the garden, bin stores, acoustic panels etc to name but a few!

Carolyn Jenkins



Please visit
www.43rdbristolscouts.org.uk
to make an online donation or
to take part in our Buy-a-Brick
campaign.

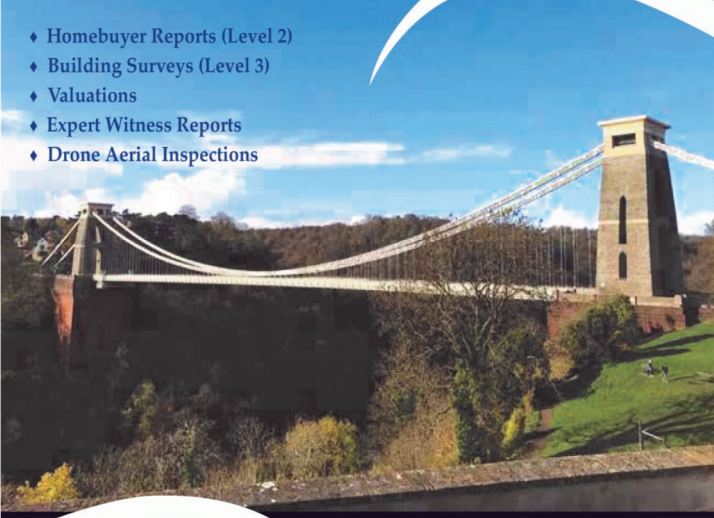
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Building Faith Brick by Brick

By Patricia Carswell

If you ever encounter someone who has studied or worked at Trinity College, it's only a matter of time before they tell you what a special place it is. Set back from Stoke Hill in ten acres of parkland, Trinity trains men and women for ordination and teaches theology to full- and part-time students. It is a vibrant community, where students and staff alike grow in their faith and seek to become more Christ-like.

Some of you will have experienced this for yourselves at a recent Open Garden event for local residents. Alongside a garden tour and tea, guests learned for themselves the many ways in which Trinity is involved in the local community, from hosting the local scout group to providing the venue for the BS9 arts trail.

At the heart of the Trinity community are the people who live on site, living, praying, worshipping and studying together. For them, Trinity is not just their college; it's also their home. *"The benefit of living on campus is being part of a community,"* says third-year residential student, Steffany. *"I feel included in everything and I get a sense of being part of a family."*

Although having a community of residential students is a real blessing, it also means student accommodation has to be maintained and kept fit for purpose. The housing on campus, much of it built many decades ago, is now in urgent need of updating, and further work is needed to make it accessible to students with mobility needs.

Quad development, interior



Artist's impression of quad development

Trinity has just completed the first phase of a new project, developing the Quad area to provide new single student accommodation, with a fully accessible room to support the needs of students with disabilities and mobility needs.

It now hopes to move into a second phase, installing a platform-lift to enable wheelchair users to access the upper floor. This would provide a further single student bedroom as well as a large living room space and two study rooms.

"We have an opportunity here to create an environment that really enhances community living," says Head of Property and Site Development Lead, Malcolm Bourne. *"It's a really exciting project and one that will enhance the college and theological training more generally – I really believe that."*

Raising funds for this project has, perhaps unsurprisingly in the current climate, been challenging. Alumni mostly go on to become clergy and have limited means, and as a specialist theological college, Trinity has been largely confined to approaching trusts and foundations with an interest in the Christian faith. Without an additional £150,000, the remaining work on the second phase will have to remain on hold.

Any support that local residents could give would be immensely welcome, whether by donating to the project, helping with fundraising or introducing the college to trusts or foundations that might have funds available for developments of this nature.



More information can be found on Trinity's website, trinitycollegebristol.ac.uk/community/site-development or via the above QR code.



The sessions will be held in church, with a short film followed by small discussion groups (the same group each time). We can offer up to 70 spaces, and you can book via the church website (or scan the QR code to go directly to the booking page).

The Bereavement Journey® is for anyone who has been bereaved at any time and in any way. The six-week course is based around a series of high-quality films and discussion groups that gently guide people through the most common aspects of grief and bereavement, enabling them to process the implications for themselves and discern next steps.

An optional seventh session explores bereavement from a Christian perspective, but the whole course is suitable for people of any faith or none.

St Mary's has partnered with other local churches to run this course several times in the last two years. This time we are offering it as an evening event, in the hope that many people will be able to come.

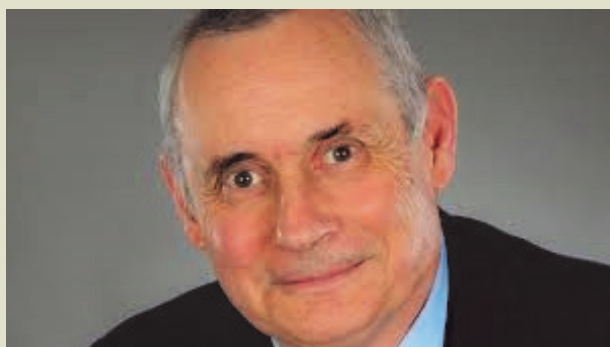
A recent participant said: *I can't think of a single person who wouldn't benefit from this course. I lost several older relatives in the space of a couple of years, and even though their deaths were timely it still helped to have the opportunity to process my grief.*

Another reflected that: *I was surprised to find myself sharing with the group about a bereavement I experienced over 50 years ago, when I was a young adult. I hadn't realised that I still carried the pain of this loss, and it helped to be able to share that with others in a safe space.*

Whoever you are, and whatever loss you have experienced, this course is for you. Do join us if you can.

**Monday evenings, starting on 22 September 2025
7-9.15pm at St Mary's Church**

Congratulations to Nick Jenkins!



We've recently become aware that Professor Nick Jenkins, FREng, a member of our congregation, was awarded an OBE in the New Year Honours.

The award is for 'Services to Renewable Energy and Smart Grid Technologies'.

Nick works at Cardiff University in the School of Engineering where he has done groundbreaking work in energy systems.

Congratulations from us all!

God Speed, Sonia!

Rev Sonia Home, Curate in the Avonside Mission Area, has been appointed to the newly-formed partnership between Hope Church and St Mary's Islington, in the Diocese of London.

She will be serving as Associate Vicar to the partnership and will be the lead clergy person for Hope's congregation.

She will be licensed into her new role on 21 September.

Please pray for Sonia and her family at this busy time of transition, and especially for her teenage children as they start at their new schools.

Thank you, Sonia, for all you have given to St Mary's and to the Mission Area.



Time for a Clear-Out

I'm the kind of person who doesn't need to wait until the Spring to have a clear out. I'm forever moving things around at home, working out what is still needed and what isn't. My family will groan affectionately whenever I propose to reshuffle the furniture in our lounge, but they do tend to appreciate the result!

Over the summer we've been doing this within the church buildings too, in final readiness for the building work on our Church Rooms. There will be more about this project in the next issue, but part of the preparation has been to relocate the office (it sounds straight-forward, but it wasn't!), and various cupboards have been emptied causing something of a domino effect. To create space for the office stationery, the choir robes had to be rehoused in the vestry, which had to be re-arranged to accommodate them (and so on)!

Mundane though these tasks might seem, they have brought me joy because they are tangible reminders that we are getting ever closer to actually starting the building work! When I became the Vicar of St Mary's, nearly 6 years ago, it seemed that we were not far from getting the project underway. God had other ideas, and what with the pandemic, and unforeseen delays in a variety of other ways, it wasn't meant to be. But here we are now, we hope ready to begin, and I'm so grateful for all the hard work and financial support of many people within the church which helped us reach this point.

Perhaps there are things in your life which have suffered unforeseen delays, or perhaps you've encountered the 'domino effect' where one challenging thing has caused other difficulties that you've needed to navigate.



Now that the summer is coming to an end and the new academic year is beginning, it may be time to take stock and discern whether you need to do an emotional (or physical) clear out. Talking things through with a trusted friend, a counsellor or a church leader could be a helpful way of processing recent experiences, in order to set you up for all that is to come.

If that's something we can support you with, please do get in touch. You might also value taking part in the Bereavement Journey (see opposite). And do look out for signs of construction in the church carpark...we wait with bated breath!

Jema

Revd Jema Ball
Vicar of St Mary's



Remembering Loved Ones

A service of remembrance and thanksgiving for loved ones who have died

Sunday 9 November
5pm

St Mary's Stoke Bishop
Refreshments served afterwards

All Welcome



From the CHURCH REGISTERS

May—July 2025

Baptism

6 July Oliver Chamberlain

Funeral

20 June Tegwen Evans

Memorial Service

30 May David Baker

Interment of Ashes

28 June Jillian Kirk

Harvesting Herbs for their Scent

By Sarah Harris



Coriander looks like French Parsley and comes from the same plant family, and not even those who sell them can always tell the difference. To find out, whether it is parsley or coriander, take a leaf, wipe it and eat it. Parsley has a slightly earthy taste, whereas coriander is more citrus.

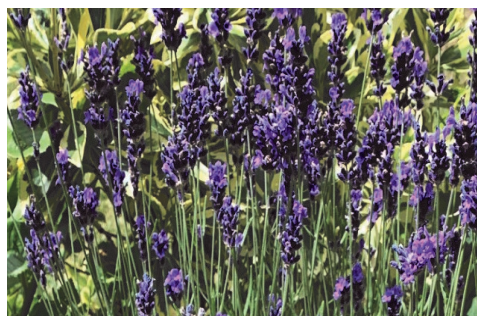
To collect seeds from Coriander, you have to let the flowers 'bolt' (carry on growing) so the seeds develop. When they are

ready, the seeds drop onto the earth beneath or, as in our case, into the paper bag. The seeds are green but eventually they turn to brown as in the left hand bowl in the top picture.

Herbs have many uses from flavouring food to medicinal purposes.

Lavender is one of the most successful plants for scent and is also good for pollinators. We want to encourage pollinators like bees and other insects because the overuse of chemical insecticides has diminished their numbers and essential pollination in a number of species.

Flowers and leaves often give the strongest scents, but seeds and roots can also give scent and flavour. Other common scented herbs in the garden are **marjoram, thyme and rosemary.**



Sweetly scented herbs are harvested in July. Below is **lemon verbena** in front of my bed of **oregano**, which attracts many bees. The oregano flowers seem fairly insignificant in size though there are many and the bees love their pollen.



The verbena in contrast, has a lovely fresh scent of lemon. Different parts of a plant can give off scent and with lemon verbena, it's the leaves which are scented.

Drying can extend the ability of herbs to give scent and flavour out of season. It also prevents the development of mildew in herbs which are then used to scent clothes and rooms as well as in cooking.

You can dry herbs by hanging them up. Space out the bunches a bit more than in our picture. At either end are herbs with brown paper bags over them in which we collected their seeds as they dried.

Herbs that moths hate

Wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*)
Southernwood (*Artemisia abrotanum*)
Camphor (*Tanacetum balsamita*) which has a strong balsamic smell that is probably unacceptable nowadays.

Make moth-repelling sachets

Here is a standard mix for repelling moths which seems to work. It's good to add a cheerful herb or two to it in order to give a fillip to the scent of the artemesia.

- 2 tablespoons of dried Southernwood or Wormwood (not to be confused with poisonous Monkshood)
- 2 tablespoons of dried lavender
- 2 tablespoons of dried mint

Mix and spoon into sachets for hanging in wardrobes, placing in drawers and in other areas favoured by moths.



Make a Catnip Mouse for Your Cat to Play With

With Sarah Harris and Lucia

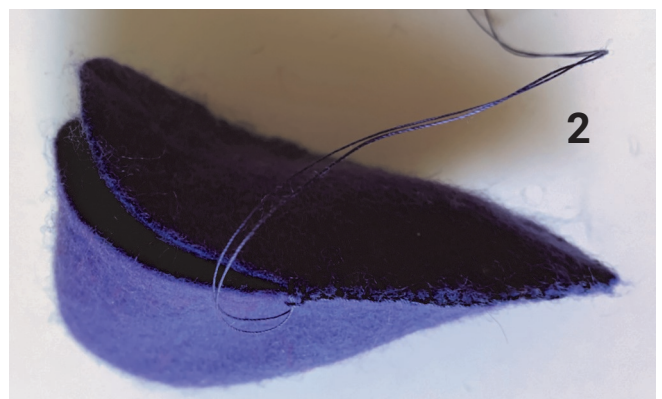
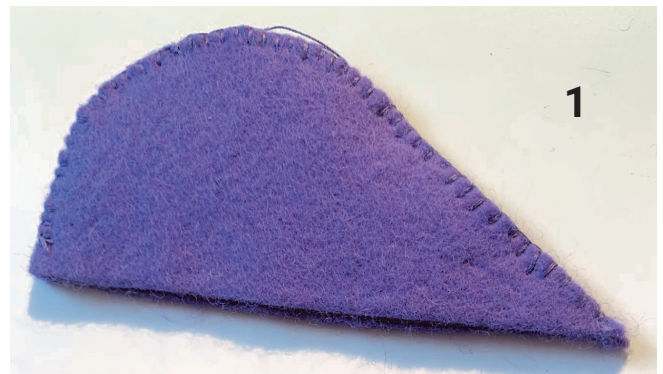
Catnip (or catmint) is a mint-like herb that contains the chemical nepetalactone, which makes cats "high". We grew our own catnip and semi dried it before Lucia stuffed it into the felt mouse she made.

At first, limit the use of catnip mouse to once a week and monitor your cat's response to the catnip before letting the cat have the mouse every day - until it falls apart!

To Make The Mouse

You will need:- catnip; felt (or another fabric that will hold in the dust and fragments of catnip); fabric for the ears; cord for the tail.

- Copy the plan at the bottom of this page and cut it out.
- Place the pattern pieces onto your fabric and cut them out. Reverse the body piece to get the second side.
- Take the two main body pieces and pin them together. (If there is a pattern on the fabric, make sure it is on the inside).
- Stitch the two side pieces together along the curved back of the mouse using blanket stitch. (1) Then turn this inside out and hey presto! You have a smooth back to the mouse.
- Now pin one side of the base to one side of your mouse, with the pointed ends matching and stitch it with blanket stitch. (2) (These stitches will show on the outside this time. Look at the photo of the finished mouse.)
- Pin the other side of the mouse base to the other side of the mouse. The mouse base might need a tiny bit of trimming to fit in exactly. Then stitch it with blanket stitch again but **leave a gap** at the back to stuff the mouse with catnip!
- Now fill your mouse with dried catnip flowers and leaves. Crush them as you go. Stick your tail into the gap too.
- Finally stitch up the gap (or stick in two velcro spots as we did, so we could refresh the catnip when we wanted.)
- Cut out ears and stick them on so that they lean forwards a bit. (3)
- We gave our mouse a little nose and eyes. (3)



mouse base

Turn this over to make
the other side of the mouse



Munificence and Memory

By Bob Mathers

Bob Mathers is a historian with a long affection for Bristol, first living here for a spell in the late 60s, before returning in 2019 to live in Stoke Bishop.

He has written a fascinating book about the rich and varied story of Bristol and how it became the most important port in England in the later Middle Ages. This article is an extract from that book.

The profits from Bristol trade did not always go back into purchasing goods, constructing ships or inducements. They also went into poor relief, the building of almshouses or towards the refurbishment and beautification of parish churches, impressive examples of which are St Mary Redcliffe and St Stephen's.

It was Benedictine monks from Glastonbury Abbey who built the first St Stephen's on the original riverside boundary of the Anglo-Saxon settlement in the 11th C. The tower we see today was erected in 1470 by the gift of the merchant John Shipward. It rises precariously to a height of around a hundred and fifty feet, crowned by a pattern of decorative stonework as light and delicate from a distance as a piece of Bruges lace is in the hand.

Shipward lived in a fine mansion adjacent to the quays where his ships moored. It raises the question of who these wealthy merchants and burgesses who could afford such grand gestures really were. We have two main sources of information – a register of over four hundred wills from 1392 to 1495 through which we catch glimpses of them at work or with their families at leisure, and a detailed, contemporary survey of the town itself undertaken by the Bristol antiquarian, William Worcester in the late 15th century.

While the poor rarely left a trace, through these doors we can at least observe people of social distinction, dressed in lined robes, ornamented with gold and silver, their houses equipped with rich tapestries and expensive, ornate beds. There are records of money to be shared, debts to be paid or items to be given to individuals.

But it is not just about possessions. The Will of Joan Ryngston reads, "(To) The forenamed son John Ryngston, with all his bequests contained" ... (the executors are to) ... "fynde unto the same John ... sufficient Learning in Gramer clothing and all other



necessaries belonging to his body until the said John come to his age of discretion (fourteen) ... or until the time of his being apprenticed."

Their acts of beneficence and material legacies reveal much of what they most valued, what they felt to be important and they are not too different from how we might feel about our own lives today. Faith was important to many and they would pay for priests to pray for their souls. High on the lists was concern for their children's education, especially enabling them to make their way in life when the parents themselves had gone.

And most merchants, given their earthly achievements, would have had a strong feeling their existence had mattered, that they counted for something in the town they had helped to build and would wish to be remembered positively for it. This state of mind is well expressed in words attributed long before, to the Anglo-Saxon King Alfred, 'I desired to live worthily as long as I lived, and to leave after my life, to the people who should come after me, the memory of me in good works.'

Bob would love to know what you thought about this article. You can contact him on bristohisto@gmail.com [*'Mediaeval Bristol: A Short History (1066-1497)*', due to be published next year].

Remembrance, Poetry and WW2

By Peter Weeks

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the largest, most destructive and deadliest conflict in history. A service of thanksgiving was held at Westminster Abbey, there were street parties across the UK and a flypast and D-Day Memorial Parade took place in London. Similar events were held in many other countries. Commemoration of war, its sacrifices and losses has not lost its hold on us.

When I was at school in the 1960s I remember people saying that memories would fade and future generations would no longer mark November 11 but the opposite has happened. There are often wreaths lying on our local war memorial, the cross at the top of Stoke Hill. Cars display large plastic poppies on their radiators. Every November many of us make a point of buying and wearing a poppy. St Mary's church is always full for the service on Remembrance Sunday.

The practice of Remembrance Day began soon after the First World War to mark the sacrifices and losses movingly described by now-famous war poets like Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon. Out of their nightmares of squalor, fear and brutality came some of the most powerful writing on the subject of war. These were soldier-poets speaking from experience, driven to try and make sense of a senseless conflict. They wanted to convey to those at home the reality of life and death in the trenches. As a result of their work, English war poetry – indeed our image of war generally – has come to be defined by futility, incompetence and Flanders mud.

***What passing-bells for those who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.***

from "Anthem for Doomed Youth" by Wilfred Owen
(1917)

Twenty-five years later, in the ensuing and far greater global conflict, a new generation of poets and critics writing in the Second World War felt themselves to be under the long shadow of Owen, Sassoon and others. Could the poetry coming out of this war say anything different? In a talk I gave two years ago I suggested that the themes of WW1 poetry range from idealism through bitterness to compassion. What are the themes of the poetry of WW2?

One big difference is that the generation of 1939 felt they had no choice. Evil had to be faced and overcome. Unlike 1914 there was no waving of flags or talk of it being over by Christmas. Acceptance, fear, absence of illusions: these were the feelings of the conscript as much as the civilian. Compared to the first conflict, WW2 turned into a vast global war of movement fought at sea and in the air as well as on land. It was a war of millions of individuals, women as well as men, a war of technology, various and complex, presenting politicians and military leaders with some unbearable moral choices. Out of this kaleidoscope of experiences came what I believe is some of the best war poetry in our language, written both by established poets as well as by unknowns who were moved to write for the first time.

***A hill flank overlooking the Axe valley.
Among the stubble a farmer and I keep watch
For whatever may come to injure our countryside—
Light-signals, parachutes, bombs or sea-invaders.***

From "Watching Post" by C Day Lewis (1943)

As part of our local remembrance events, on Thursday 30 October I will be giving a talk with readings at St Mary's about the poetry of the Second World War. (See Notice Board on page 15) I hope to show that the words of these lesser-known poets can take us beyond our imagination and tell us different and important truths.

Remembrance at St Mary's Sunday 9 November

9.30 am at the War Memorial on Stoke Hill
Parade to St Mary's

10 am Remembrance Service for all ages with Communion
5 pm Service to Remember Loved Ones





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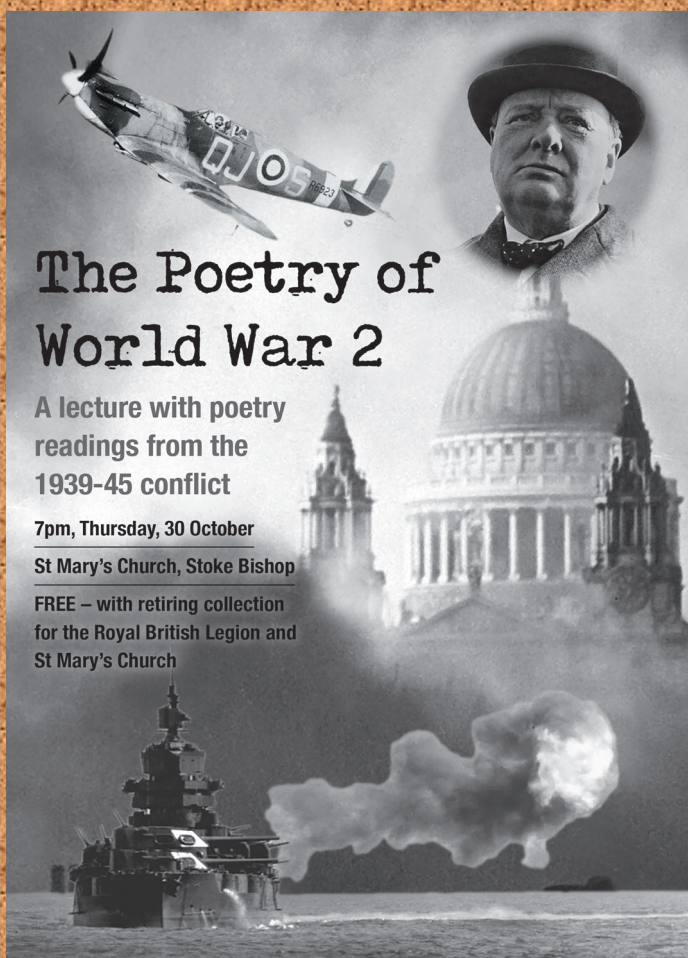
**Coming up
...this autumn
@ St Mary's**

Harvest Festivals
Sunday 28 September
9 am and 10.30 am

Speaker from Sixty-One
Monday 13 October

Remembrance
Sunday 9 November
10 am service only
5pm Service to remember loved ones

Quiz Night
Saturday 15 November

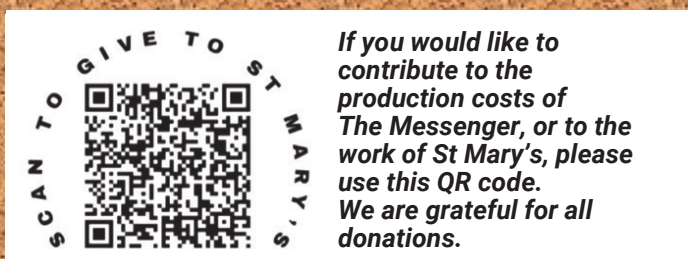


**The Poetry of
World War 2**

A lecture with poetry readings from the 1939-45 conflict

7pm, Thursday, 30 October
St Mary's Church, Stoke Bishop

FREE – with retiring collection for the Royal British Legion and St Mary's Church



SCAN TO GIVE TO ST MARY'S

If you would like to contribute to the production costs of *The Messenger*, or to the work of St Mary's, please use this QR code. We are grateful for all donations.

Community Diary Autumn 2025

Friends of Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve

Saturdays 20 Sept, 18 Oct, 15 Nov, 13 Dec, 10 am - noon:
Working parties

Access from Glenavon Park entrance. No experience needed but please bring gloves and secateurs, loppers etc. Hot drinks and cake or biscuits provided.

For further details please see our website

www.oldsneedparknaturereserve.org

To register for a working party, join the Friends, or contact the committee, email fospnr@gmail.com

Stoke Bishop and Sneyd Park Local History Group

Friday 26 Sept - The Bristol Tapestry; its story and the making of it.

By Carole Tapper and Sheila Dawkins.

Friday 7 Nov – Harry Dolman; the millionaire inventor who became 'Mr Bristol City'.

By Clive Burton.

All talks in Village Hall at 7.30 pm.

Visitors welcome, £3 per meeting.

Membership £6 pa. For enquiries, please email

sblocalhistory@gmail.com,

or phone 0117 9686010

University Botanic Garden

Sunday 5 Oct: Apple Day: help make proper cider!

Sept – Oct open daily 10 am to 4.30 pm.

Nov–Feb open weekdays 10am–dusk.

'Friends', children & students, free.

Staff, & alumni £5, Adults £9.

Wednesday is DAISY day (donate as it suits you).

See website for up-to-date information on events

www.bristol.ac.uk/botanic-garden

Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project

Full programme of walks, talks and activities.

Booking essential for all events

For full details of events and courses, and booking arrangements visit

<https://avongorge.org.uk/whatson>

phone 0117 428 5600 or

Stoke Bishop and Sea Mills Ward Forum

Public meeting with Local Councillors tba.

Everyone welcome.

To receive notice of meeting, join the mailing list: email

stokebishopforum@aol.com

Stoke Bishop Townswomen's Guild

1st Thursday of each month 2.15 pm
in St Mary's Church

Friendly tea, chat and social outings.

For details, contact Sheila 914 7159
or Angela 968 6473

Matthew 7:7-8: “seek and you shall find”.

The Bristol Orienteering Klub (BOK)

By David Faulkner

Admittedly when these verses of the seventh chapter of the Gospel of Matthew were written it was primarily referring to the power of prayer not the sport of orienteering but, nevertheless, navigating, asking and seeking are all metaphors for the act of prayer and definitely many orienteers have resorted to prayer whilst finding their way around particularly difficult courses.

The sport of orienteering began in the 19th century in Scandinavia and is still very popular throughout the Nordic region. Orienteering is now a global sport and was introduced to the UK in the 1950s by renowned Olympians including Chris Brasher.

Orienteering is an inclusive sport. It is a sport for everyone, whether you are an elite athlete, a family group, or have maturity on your side; at a high level, it is a competitive sport.

It involves running (or walking) using a map and (usually) a compass to navigate your way around a set of control points, denoted on the terrain by orange and white markers, using whatever route best suits you. You choose your own route and pace, which usually depends on your fitness level, age, and navigational ability. Beginners tend to use paths or obvious line features; more advanced orienteers often try to run through more challenging terrain. It's the ultimate mind and body workout.

BOK was formed in 1971 by the amalgamation of two smaller clubs: the Henbury Rutters and Bristol Footpads (British Aerospace & Rolls Royce) to promote the sport of orienteering in the Greater Bristol area, and to provide teams for competitions. With a membership of over 300, BOK is one of the largest clubs in the UK and many of our members have gone on to represent their country in the Home Internationals and GB Orienteering.

We regularly hold events in our local area and welcome novices to come along and try out the sport.



Below is an example of one of our maps. Can you spot the Churchyard? You may also notice control number 112 which was hung on the wooden fence on the footpath tracing the old Roman Road. Our maps tend to be of a much larger scale and with more detail than a typical Ordnance Survey map.



In the past year we held several events with local schools, including Stoke Bishop Primary, and we like to encourage young people and their families to take part. As you can see from the photographs, young people enjoy themselves and get a tremendous sense of achievement upon completing their courses.

Orienteering is an exciting and challenging outdoor sport and adopting an active lifestyle has both physical and mental benefits; it improves your fitness, makes you stronger and can make you better able to manage certain health conditions. Physical activity helps people take control of their lives, be more independent and live well for longer.

Whilst orienteering is a physical sport, the concepts of direction, guidance, and journey found within it can be meaningfully connected to the themes and narratives of the New Testament, offering a deeper understanding of both the sport and the spiritual path to follow.

*To learn more about the sport of orienteering and our events, please visit our website:
<https://www.bristolorienteing.org.uk>*

David Faulkner has lived in the parish for over 30 years. He and his family have had close links with St Mary's, the Scouts and Stoke Bishop Primary School over the course of this time.

The Youth of Today

By Tristan Haggar

Some of us may feel worried or unsure about the youth of today, but I assure you, if you witnessed a session of Fuel or Bulb, you would feel encouraged that the next generation is in good hands!

It has been such a pleasure to immerse myself into youth ministry at St. Mary's over the last few months. When I started serving at Stoke Bishop in October, I enjoyed helping out occasionally at the various activities for younger people. This increased to frequent attendance, and more recently I was humbled to be invited to take on the leadership of both Fuel and Bulb, our regular groups for teenagers.

Beyond the responsibilities of planning and organising, it has been a privilege to build relationships with these amazing young people, and feel God's presence moving amongst them. I love the rhythm of Fuel. Friday evening sessions always seem to begin with high energy, and the children have free rein to play football, enjoy board games or catch up on the latest school news with each other. We then blast into a game of something like indoor hockey or dodgeball, before the energy simmers down for a period of reflection.

It is always a joy to notice how we can go from being hyperactive pinballs, to sitting, sharing and attentively listening to a reflective question (most of the time anyway!) As a leader, I am learning to simply ask a question, such as: 'What does it mean to love your neighbour?' and then to facilitate THEIR conversation, with just the occasional steering. It is great to listen and to encourage their insights, and often they are profound, with the teens who have a Christian faith being unafraid to talk about this publicly. Then the energy cranks up again as we play another game until the end of the session and we encourage them to go home, though usually they don't seem to want to!

Bulb is our fortnightly discipleship group for young people, where we meet to have conversations about our Christian faith, ending with a meal together. It is incredibly encouraging to see teenagers willingly picking up a Bible, discussing its stories and themes, and showing genuine interest in each other's insights. It has been a good challenge to try and take these ancient narratives, and contextualize them so that they feel relevant to our young people.

The Bible is a rich source of eternal wisdom, but what can it say to a young person during revision for exams, dealing with lunchtime dramas, preparing for career plans, or working on a group project? How can the Bible be a source of perspective to engage with modern social and political situations? As it turns out, the Bible has a lot to say about all these things and much more!



Fun at Fuel Youth Group

Our conversations have been rich, and it has been a joy to see relationships grow throughout the last few months.

I feel as if I am standing on the shoulders of the giants who have invested in this ministry in Stoke Bishop for so many years. In particular Nick and Rachel Powlesland who have served at St Mary's for a long time and have tirelessly come alongside children and young people, encouraging them in their faith. I am new to the team, and I have much to learn, but I am glad and excited to move into the new academic year, ready for a fun and Spirit-filled engagement with the local youth.

I'm also excited that from September I'll be able to invest some time in ministry with local schools, by supporting a Bristol-based charity (and one of our Mission Partners), Encounter Christianity, as they deliver high-quality RE lessons in schools free, to enhance the Christian teaching of the RE curriculum. Beyond that, I hope to continue to be a faithful servant of Jesus, and a role model for those coming up behind me in the faith. I have been encouraged by all the youth here, and I am excited to see what happens next.



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How You Too Can Be 'Green'

By Eileen Stonebridge

We have a choice as individuals as to whether we will take any action towards safeguarding the environment or not. A little bit of thought and a bit of effort can make a big difference.

Today there are many opportunities to help mitigate climate change, help increase biodiversity or reduce pollution. Society has changed its behaviour. Fifty years ago, we would think nothing of throwing something discarded on the fire, not thinking of the air pollution. Today few have an open fire or solid fuel boiler on which to do this.

Recycling is another big change, though I do remember saving the salvage back in the 1940s and some of us remember the rag and bone man who collected discarded items. The first bottle banks were introduced in 1977 and household recycling began in the 1980s. The Household Recycling Act of 2003 required all local councils to set up recycling by 2010. Bristol was early in the field and had set up a system by 2004.

Most people recycle at least some of their waste, but in some student accommodation, apparently, it is all thrown in together. You will have heard the rumour that the whole lot is sent abroad, but this is not the case. The Council Website tells us the destination of each type of waste. So everyone who recycles is doing a bit for the environment.

Another resource where the individual can play a part is water conservation. Water butts not only store water for use in the garden or for car washing, but they also hold back water from flowing rapidly to rivers when there is a downpour. We are seeing more of these nowadays but unfortunately paving over front gardens is increasing rapid runoff. If space is needed for car parking, gravel can be used with islands of soil for plants as a permeable alternative to brick and tarmac. A water meter is more economical especially in small households than paying a fixed amount based on council tax, and encourages us to save water. Dual flush toilet cisterns help too.



Dripping taps should be repaired at once. Even not having a running tap when cleaning teeth saves water. Filling your kettle with the amount of water required saves both water and energy. Retaining the water run off until the hot water comes through, gives a supply for watering plants.



Gardeners can make a big contribution by growing food, composting rather than using inorganic fertilizers and growing plants which are good for pollinators. Not being too tidy in the garden but leaving places where small mammals and insects can hide undisturbed is a good idea.

None of the above ideas involves much financial outlay, but opportunities for saving energy come with the installation of solar panels and heat pumps. Heat pump installation is increasing, with 52% more installed in 2024 than in 2023, though the figure falls well below government target of 600,000 by 2028.



Other lifestyle changes which can help the environment include buying local produce, eating organic food, reducing meat consumption and avoiding convenience foods. Walk more, use the car less and cut down on flying to help reduce your carbon footprint.

Most of these changes are small-scale at an individual level but their cumulative effect is huge. All that is needed is a bit of thought about the impact we are having on the environment.

Helping Hand

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Darren Jones

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Helping Hand

is compiled by Paul Lewis-Smith.
If you have changes, additions or
updates to suggest please contact
him on 968 4221 or e-mail:
plewissmith@blueyonder.co.uk

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www.bristolairport.co.uk

Cover picture:

Remembrance parade,
St Mary's Stoke Bishop.
Photo by Keith Sheather

