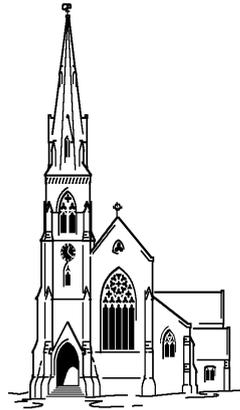


August 2021

# St John's Church

Welcoming - Worshipping - Loving - Growing



## Jottings

### Coming Home

It's great to see the rafts back out in the bay. Their arrival marks the start of summer but last year – due to Covid – they never appeared. It's good to have them back.

My favourite time to swim to a raft is first thing on a sunny day. I swam out there with Noah and Poppy at 6am recently – on a still and bright morning – it was stunning. From the rafts you see Weymouth being lit up by the morning sun and you see our church standing out dramatically as part of the Weymouth skyline.

St John's has provided a landmark for seafarers for many years. A glance in the right direction when you're out at sea - maybe lost and disorientated - our spire points the way home.

Later that morning we had the privilege of hosting the School Leavers' Service at church. During the service we gave out Bibles and

prayed for each child by name. I also told the children that whenever they saw our church – they should think of it as home - a place where they are welcome and can be themselves, a place where they can find comfort, peace and support. Wouldn't it be great to see these young people engaged in church over the coming years? Let's pray for that!

The idea of 'coming home to church' is particularly relevant for us all right now. Opportunities to gather are increasing and restrictions are lifting. But we've been away for so long! Online services, Zooms, WhatsApp's, emails and Jottings have kept us engaged and informed but we haven't met together to worship and socialise for such a long time. We're all out of the habit. Some may be anxious, others feeling disengaged, others unsettled. Some have joined the church yet not yet

entered the building. Some may want everything to go back to being just as it was. Others will want things to change. All these thoughts and emotions are valid and we want to journey together safely and inclusively.

So how do you feel about coming back? My message to you is the same as to the young people, "This is your church. You are welcome. See it as home."

Football didn't quite home after all (maybe next time). Over the past year we've spent more time in our homes than ever before. Now it's time to remember – or maybe discover for the first time - that church is home too. To quote a worship song we've started singing ... 'The Father's arms are open wide.'

With love



## RECRUITING - Dinner Ladies (or Gentlemen)

Occasionally we have a call to supply meals for church members who are unwell or can't manage to cook for themselves for some reason. I have a list of people who have volunteered in the past and would love to hear from anyone who would be willing to cook a meal now and then. To reassure you that this will not be onerous, we have only had three calls for meals since the start of lockdown.

Diane Blackwell



The Open Air services in the last few weeks have reminded us how blessed we are to have so much land around our church which we can use for services, summer fetes, Little Fishes, young people's groups and many other things. We are really thankful to Josh, Dave, Alan, and so many others for maintaining the grass and starting to tackle the overgrown beds.

At present we have a definite plan for the car park, drawn up by the architects, but we don't have a management plan for the green-space, for the benefit of both people and wildlife. Some ideas have already been put forward, such as having a community

garden with raised beds for vegetables and fruit. We can create a safe enclosed area for young children to play, or for quiet contemplation. We could maintain an area for native wildflowers to benefit birds, bees and butterflies, and establish a mowing regime to have grassland areas. We can plant native trees, set up bird tables and feeders (which would need to be regularly stocked).

It would be good to get expert advice and training, so with the permission of the DCC we have approached Dorset Wildlife Trust to see what help they can give. But the on-going maintenance will be up to all of us. Lots of ideas, but if you have any ideas, thoughts, expertise, do let us know. We need you!

David Boyd



We can't put soft plastic into our green bins in Dorset (only 17% of UK local authorities collect it). However, Sainsbury's in Weymouth is now accepting flexible plastics

such as **crisp packets, food pouches, salad bags, biscuit and cake wrappers.** (the bin is inside the shop). Tesco and the Co-op are also rolling out similar schemes. Do ask your local supermarket if they are recycling flexible plastics – if not then we may consider a recycling point at St John's.

David Boyd

### Notes from the DCC meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021

- Safeguarding:

There is a copy of a safeguarding manual in the vestry which anyone can consult.

- Eco Team:

Following investigations by the team, their findings have been entered onto the A Rocha survey for the Worship and Building sections. The Worship section is nearly eligible for a gold award and the Building section is on track for a silver award. To gain any award level we must have a minimum score over all categories. Information is being loaded onto the church website and the team would appreciate help to set up visuals. It was agreed that the Eco Team approach Dorset Wildlife Fund regarding their Urban Green Project scheme.

- Tom shared his plans for the summer, including Open Air Services with (hopefully) live streaming, New Wine on the big screen and Open Church on a Wednesday. Jos shared some exciting plans for Ignite.
- The DCC agreed to partnership with Transforming Lives for Good (TLG). This would enable us to work more closely with St John's School and will be led by Susie. Other initiatives for the church to become involved with the school were discussed.
- Tom gave an update on the Renewal Project and thanked those who have been involved. The kitchen is not quite finished but the bulk of the work has been done. Projects for the future include: the chairs, the car park, a fence along the heating duct and the gates at the west entrance.

Diane Blackwell

## Hope is alive and well'

(This article appeared in Grapevine from the Diocese of Salisbury on 24th July. There are many interesting articles from across the diocese)

The vision for a former vicarage in the heart of Weymouth, bought by the parish in 2018 for redevelopment as a centre for children, young people and families, is becoming a reality.



Hope House, in the grounds of the beachside St John's Church, has a vision of being a place "that our young people can call

home and be proud of. A place where people have fun, develop friendships, explore, grow and share their faith."

Radipole and Melcombe Regis parish leaders put in a bid when the building came onto the property market four years ago, and their vision is becoming a reality.

Reporting to a parish council meeting this week, the Revd Tom Coopey, Vicar of St John's Church who has prime responsibility for the project, declared:

*"The Hope House project is alive and well. The pandemic has certainly slowed down the pace of development and progress, but we are now in a position to take some significant steps forward."*

Having committed substantial church funds to buy the building, the management team needed to ensure they could undertake major renovative work to make it suitable for its numerous purposes.

They achieved this by renting out the four existing first floor rooms to local businesses and organisations, along with numerous group bookings for the ground floor meeting spaces that continue to expand.

One of the tenants, the Weymouth Area Development Trust, assumed management duties initially, but these devolved back to the parish last month (June 2021). This now requires the employment of a part-time caretaker, who will also have responsibility for drumming up more business revenue.

In addition, the PCC agreed to begin a recruitment search for a full-time Youth Worker to, in Tom Coopey's words, "*develop Hope House into the Parish's hub of youth and community work that we have long envisaged,*" hopefully beginning from September.

Summing up for the PCC, Tom said the aim was to create "*a fun, friendly and supportive environment where young people's faith is nurtured through discipleship, worship, mentoring and evangelistic groups and initiatives.*"

This, he said, could include "*regular drop in sessions, building relationships, working alongside children and family workers, health visitors, schools, local authority and other service providers in order to provide support and resources for families.*"

Hope for the future, for Weymouth youth!

## Hilary's reflections based partly on the Flanders and Swann song 'T'was on a Monday morning'

It was a Friday morning, the gas man came to call (anytime between 8am and 1pm) to service the central heating boiler and gas fire. It was going to be a busy morning, but by 10am, the gas man had been, and also the butcher and Sainsbury's had done their deliveries. Fortunately, we didn't have to wait for the postman or postwoman.

So we had the rest of the morning free. Mike and I decided to walk along the Rodwell Trail, accompanied by the rollator/transit chair. We stopped off at Sandsfoot Castle Garden Café for a drink and shared one of their delicious fruit scones, filled with clotted cream, jam and strawberries. Feeling energised, Mike decided it would be good for both of us to visit Sandsfoot Cove for a paddle in the sea, before carrying on to Smallmouth Cove, next to Ferrybridge. On the return journey, we stopped again at the same café for a lunchtime snack.

We are so grateful to have had this special time out and to marvel at God's wonderful creation, including all the wild flowers and butterflies. Meeting other travellers on the

trail gave us a chance to have a chat with them and to show God's love, by just being friendly !

There are a couple of men with their dogs who regularly sit on the side of the Rodwell Trail by Buxton Road Bridge, who are needy and have health issues. Like others in a similar situation, they have several cans of alcoholic drinks, which helps to numb the pain. We have met them on a number of occasions, and engage in casual conversation (with some banter of course).

Back to the gas man again. On the mantelpiece above the gas fire that was being serviced, I had painted on a small canvas, an acrylic picture, comparing God's wisdom with man's wisdom, based on Proverbs 15, v 1-7. It would be good to think that the gas man had had an opportunity to read it!

So as we start the summer holiday break, may we find opportunities to show the love of Jesus to other people.

Hilary Lidstone

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### Catching Up

We hope you are all safe and well. We have missed being able to worship regularly at St John's and we thought you might like to know some of what we have been up to.



We haven't been able to raise awareness of adult bullying by delivering workshops over the past year but continue to oversee Dorset Anti-Bullying

Service (DABS) together, which is a not-for-profit project [www.dabsonline.org](http://www.dabsonline.org). Our vision is to provide confidential support and training for anybody, affected directly or indirectly by bullying at any time.

Currently, we have a particular focus on reaching those who have been affected by Homophobic bullying, which is when people behave or speak in a way, which

makes someone feel bullied because of their actual or perceived sexuality. Research studies consistently show that individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) are subjected to bullying approximately 75% more often than those who are heterosexual. If there is anybody reading this, who has been affected in this way, please know, you can contact us safely and confidentially

Email: [info@dabsonline.org](mailto:info@dabsonline.org)

Sadly, Alison has seen more than a 100% increase in enquiries for counselling and support services over the past 12 months. She is currently working with a hybrid of online and face to face appointments and gets so many enquiries, she has a waiting list and needs to turn many people away and refer them on to other forms of support, which she finds very difficult.

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She is increasingly working as a clinical supervisor, supporting & training the next generation of counsellors & psychotherapists, nurses, doctors, social workers and ministers of all denominations and faiths.

Like most people, getting away has been very difficult over the past 16 months. When we have been able we have travelled in our campervan and whilst at home have enjoyed landscaping our garden. We recently picked our first lemon, the wildflower area looks glorious and our cabbages are coming along well too.

We were fortunate to recently tour the whole coast of Wales and found the place where Alison's Dad grew up in a one up, one down, back-to-back in South Wales.

For those of you who have been unable to travel, we thought you might like to see some of our photographs.



We hope we can see you in person, before not too long.

In the meantime, we send you our love and prayers,

Malcolm and Alison xx

### **An email message from Pat in Peru**

*(You may remember that Pat joined us in June for the outdoor Pentecost service. She had been in the UK longer than expected due to Covid)*

Just a quick message to say I've arrived in Peru. Everything OK with journey but Madrid to Lima flight very full and it was a struggle being doubled masked for a 12 hour flight on a full plane. Long queues in security and immigration but paperwork all fine

Raul and Javier met me and it was a long Friday night journey from one end of Lima to the other.

Went straight to bed and woke up UK

morning time to hear rain on the Shalom tin roof. Plan to continue sleeping ....

Thanks for prayers  
Love Pat



*Please continue to pray for Pat as she settles back in Lima and her work with the Shalom centre that supports people with disabilities and their families.*

*Jill Flux*