



March 2021 40p

The Orwell Group of Parishes

www.beneficeorwell.co.uk

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You would be made most welcome at any of the services in our group of parishes. If you would like more information, please contact the relevant Church Warden or Minister

If you would like to subscribe to this monthly newsletter, please contact Dawn Wilson by email dawn@richardhatton.co.uk

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE 5pm Thursday 25th March 2021

From the Rectory...

So here we are in Lent, though in some ways the whole year has felt a bit like Lent... so maybe we should just ignore Lent... after all we don't need any more deprivation this year!

However that would miss the point I think, Lent isn't a time for depriving ourselves but for giving ourselves the opportunity to grow closer to God, not because he will love us more if we do certain things but because God loves us.

If you haven't already done so, there are still some Lent Bags in the churches so do collect one - and if you would rather I just email you the documents let me know I can do that too.

A lot of our emphasis on Lent this year is on looking after ourselves because we are God's dearly beloved and that is reflected in the contents of the bags.

We are beginning to come out of lockdown, children are returning to school - thank heavens, I have worried about both our children and our teachers as they struggle to meet the needs of the children in school and those at home. But we still need to be cautious, what we don't want is to spend the spring and summer with numbers increasing because we think its all over.

Hopefully we will begin again to have services in our church buildings, almost certainly by Holy Week.

The ministry team, the churchwardens and PCCs will ensure that there are a variety of services, in church and online as we approach this most important festival in the Christian Church.

Watch out too for different ways of keeping this celebration...

Take care and stay safe

God bless

The Revd Felicity Couch

ARRINGTON NOTES

March 2021

It was with sadness and a sense of loss that we learnt that Don Hollands had died in the evening of the 28th January 2021 aged 91 yrs old. Don did not fear dying and passed away peacefully in his own bed and at home no doubt to a background chatter of the family who had come to see him although they were certainly not expecting him to die at that point. His funeral could not take place until much later but at 2.30 pm on Tuesday 23rd February he was laid to rest in the south churchyard of Wimpole church.

At present funeral services are still limited to only 30, but the church was at that capacity on that sunny, bright, dry if not warming afternoon and although we could not sing we heard the music he had chosen for his hymns as well saying the words of selected verses. As his body left the church, he went out to the music of "in an English Country Garden" something he always chose for every one of the so called 'Body services' at Wimpole when families came together to celebrate and remember someone in their family who had donated body organs so that others could live more fully. As that music faded it was taken up by the birdsong of that early spring afternoon although only two hours later it was to become overcast and windy.

Don had a strong Faith and a commitment to public service and for the latter he was awarded the British Empire Medal by the Queen. Don appeared not only as an accomplished organist to churches within the group but his gifts of music were shared well beyond the bounds of these parishes and even the Diocese; one would find him playing at Petersfield School in Orwell as well as at the Clifton Close community rooms in Arrington. His Faith and his sense of service to the community led him to be a Trustee of the Arrington almshouses, a long time churchwarden at St Nicholas Arrington, as well as starting the St Nicholas church choir and supporting the Arrington Sunday school with Thelma. He was part of the Wimpole Speedwatch team one of the first teams to be established in these

villages, to manage speeding traffic in the community, and maintained a flower stall and later the hot dog stall at the Arrington Garden fetes. Don will indeed be sadly missed.

Our thoughts and prayers at this difficult time are with Thelma his wife of some 56 years, his four sons Christopher, Steven, James and David as well as Don and Thelma's grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Don, rest in Peace and Rise in Glory.

MB

Church magazine

Once again this month there will be a virtual magazine on the benefice website, beneficeorwell.co.uk

Thank you for those who have made donations for the magazine subs either in cash through my door or online. They are very welcome and will help to ensure that by next month (hopefully) we will be able to have a printed one delivered again :)

If you have meant to and not quite got round to making a donation, the details are for those of you who are happy to make online payments can do so either by clicking [here](#) or the details are;

Benefice of Orwell Group of Parishes

Sort code: 01-09-50 Account number: 04196597

If you would rather donate by cash then please just put an envelope through my door.

Thank you

Revd Felicity

All Saints, Barrington – March 2021

At Christmas, Julie gave us a “Faith” symbol; mine remains on my window not sure who sees it – maybe a few – I hope so!

So much time consuming work has gone into producing the Lent bags containing many thoughtful items plus a booklet to read daily. All the objects are very interesting – I particularly love the shell – and I will be using these as we progress through the next few weeks. I know that a good number of people attended the Ash Wednesday service which was well received. Lots more ZOOMS to come too.

Messy Church bags will again be provided by Felicity. She has left them for collection as usual at Barrington and the Vicarage.

Many of us have now had both vaccines, our second jab is booked. I do hope that anyone feeling doubtful should be reassured and not hesitate to have it. Any after effects can be nothing compared with the real thing. We had no side effects at all. Soon all will have had them.

Last month I said ‘Spring is on the way’. I think it has sprung!! The evenings are still light after 5pm so our days are definitely getting longer – although they have been colder. However, today is warm and the sunsets have been quite incredible. We are so lucky not to have had flooding disasters – just the inconvenience of some roads under water. Sadly ‘my’ sheep have gone and I do miss them.

The following was sent to me; I thought I would share it with you.
Stay safe. *Jcb*

Caitriona Loughrey Global

Barely the day started and... it's already six in the evening.

Barely arrived on Monday and it's already Friday.

... And the month is already over.

... And the year is almost over.

... And already 40, 50, 60, 70, 80 years of our lives have passed.

... And we realize that we lost our parents, friends.
... And we realize it's too late to go back...
So... Let's try, despite everything, to enjoy the remaining time...
Let's keep looking for activities that we like...
Let's put some colour in our grey...
Let's smile at the little things in life that put balm in our hearts.
And despite everything, we must continue to enjoy with serenity
this time we have left...
Let's try to eliminate the afters...
I'm doing it after...
I'll say after...
I'll think about it after...
We leave everything for later like " after " is ours.
Because what we don't understand is that:
Afterwards, the coffee gets cold...
Afterwards, priorities change...
Afterwards, the charm is broken...
Afterwards, health passes...
Afterwards, the kids grow up...
Afterwards, parents get old...
Afterwards, promises are forgotten...
Afterwards, the day becomes the night...
Afterwards, life ends...
And then often it's too late....
So... Let's leave nothing for later...
Because still waiting, see you later, we can lose the best moments,
The best experiences,
Best friends,
The best family...
The day is today... The moment is now...
We are no longer at the age where we can afford to postpone what
needs to be done right away.
So let's see if you have time to read this message and then share it.
Or maybe... you'll leave it for... " later "...
And you'll never share it...

NEWS FROM WIMPOLE

Candlemas was on 2nd February, a few of us will lit our candles at 6pm and stood outside on the side of the road for 5 minutes. We had a socially distanced gathering and remembered Don.

Don Hollands BEM

It was with great sadness that we heard Don had died at the end of January. Until very recently, he was still seen driving his Jaguar up to the village shop. The village has so much to be grateful for, Don was a Parish Councillor and member of the PCC for in excess of 50 years. His loyal service to the community will be hard to follow.

Don's funeral was held on 23rd February, it was a bright sunny day. The church was full of spring flowers, Mary played the organ and Malcolm took the service. As so few were able to attend Don's funeral his son Chris, who gave the Eulogy, has given permission for it to be published.
JPW

Early years.

Born in London on 21 Sept.1929 dad grew up on the Hollands family Farm and Mill at Stanwick, Northants.

Dads parents were a very strict, Edwardian couple where children were to be seen and not heard. At the age of five dad and his sister Joyce were sent off to boarding school, Dad went to Monkton Combe in Bath and Joyce to Benenden in Kent.

Dad was a very good scholar and also won medals for rugby, high jump and boxing. School was where he discovered his love of music and developed the talent for playing the piano and the organ, unknown to most, he also played the violin.

Between terms, dad would come back home from Bath on the steam train, when on Sundays, and from the age of ten, would be the organist at the Methodist Chapel in Stanwick. The Hollands family had this chapel built back in the mid-19th century. (it's now a private dwelling)

After leaving Monkton Combe dad went directly to Sandhurst for Officer training, however, after completing this he decided that army life was not for him and so went on to earn his degree at Agricultural College in preparation for joining the family business at Stanwick Mill Farm.

Married life.

It was in that old Hollands chapel that Mum first caught the eye of dad, she was suitably impressed by his mastery of the church organ and the beautiful music that flowed forth, but mum was not quite so impressed by the state of his muddy brogues and frayed tweed jacket.

They were married on May 7th 1955 and over the following years they produced us four boys, three grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

In 1959, and after over 100 years of ownership, the Hollands family decided to sell the Farm and business to the Tarmac group for gravel extraction, the land is now known as the Outdoor Leisure Centre, Stanwick Lakes.

At this point dad decided to strike out on his own and worked for a number of farms across the counties of Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

Working Life

His last farming post was at the Cambridge University Farm at Malton. After eight years at Malton dad's back, not being as robust as it used to be, decided to go for a less strenuous line of work. over the following years he had a number of different jobs.

Whilst at Malton Farm, he also served as a special constable and for a short time in the early 70's he was Traffic Warden 21 in Cambridge. He then went on to be Transport Manager at Modulux in Cambridge and then finally landed a very comfortable position as chauffeur for Huntingdon Research Centre until his retirement in 1990. This role took him all over the UK and Ireland, meeting many prominent scientists and politicians, it also developed his love of the odd Mars bar!

Public duty.

Dad was a well-known figure in the local counties, not just for being a Church organist across five parishes and Church Warden at Arrington but also for spending over fifty years as serving member and chairman of the parish council.

As one local resident recently told me "**he kept a grandfatherly eye on what was going on in the village**".

Dad and mum were also known for their fund-raising, benefitting many local causes, with their plant sales and even having the hot dog stand at the Arrington fetes.

Continued.....

In the 2016 Queens New Year honours list, dad was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to the community, this made him very proud and he humbly accepted it.

A well-deserved honour indeed, and to put the icing on the cake so to speak, dad and mum were invited to a Garden party at Buckingham Palace in May where Prince Charles admired dad's walking stick.

Carved in the form of a badger and given to him by his friend Graham de Mont. Whilst taking a closer look at the stick and giving it a trial run, Prince Charles said” **I could do with this to beat the buggers back with**” and they both laughed together at the thought of it.

Summary

So, after a very long life of health, happiness, a lot of care and thought for others, dad is now at rest. Despite dad's mastery of a number of musical instruments, he was never known to blow his own trumpet.

Donald Hollands, Dad, will be greatly missed by all those that knew and loved him and I wish that I and others possessed more of his of his morality, patience and humility.

Extra interest

Stanwick Mill pond and river were a very rich source for eels and the Hollands firm used to harvest these by the thousands and send them down to London where they would be processed and sold all over the world, you may have heard of the once famous Hollands Jellied Eels.



They first moved to Malton Farm in 1963, then to Orwell in 1970, then on to Wimpole in 1973.

ORWELL NOTES.

It seems impossible that we are in Lent already. It is amazing how much better we feel with a few minutes of daylight each day, and more sunshine than snow. There is also the feeling that the worst may be over if we all do our part and keep the rules until it is safe to relax them.

It still seems strange to have no church services, but we are learning to manage the complications of modern technology, and listen where we cannot always see. I find that the daily services on BBC Radio 4 long-wave are a good daily discipline, and, as there is only me here, I can sing without embarrassment. I also read Compline every night which is a comfort.

Although we are apart from each other, the church is still there, and it is open every day for prayer. Also the Food Bank is still in the porch, and do please feel free to add to it if you are passing. There are still people in the village who need what is there. Pasta and tins of soup seem to be popular, as well as flour and bags of sugar. Do please try to keep this going.

I am sure we were all sorry to hear of the death of Don Hollands, who has been a member of the benefice for many years. He was regular in attendance at Communion in whichever church it was held, and at one time or other had played the organs in all of the churches. I was privileged to be at his funeral in Wimpole, and in the peace of the churchyard he was laid to rest as he would have wished. I am sure that we all send our thoughts and prayers to Thelma and the family. He will be greatly missed.

As the year rolls on, do keep a look out for what is happening about Easter and Mothering Sunday, as well as Good Friday. They will all be here before we can imagine, as time still seems to fly by. Do think about the children returning to school on March 8th. It will be hard for them to get into their routine again, but the better weather may make life easier for them and their parents.

Thank you to all those, particularly Felicity and the Ministry Team, and those who have kept us in touch with each other during this long time of lockdown. You have all been a great help and we are grateful.
EJS.

Methodist Chapel

Even during this difficult time of the pandemic time seems to go by with just as much urgency and the bulletin deadline appears before we know it!

Life has been far from normal in the Methodist Chapel, however we managed to put on a magical display of a Christmas Village in the porch as was reported in the December bulletin. Our thanks to everyone who made such lovely and supportive comments and contributed to the Chapel funds.

We decided that although we were not able to meet with friends over the Christmas period, it would be good to let them know we were thinking of them. We delivered 20 Christmas bags containing, mince pies, chocolate, tea bags, a Christmas decoration, a jar of jam or pickle and a Christmas message.

L	A
E	L
G	L
G	E
E	G
R	R
O	O
C	P
T	U
E	S
T	Z

Impromptu:

Members of Impromptu were very sorry to hear the news this week that the Rev Peter Jennings died in January.

He was former minister at Orwell and played guitar with Impromptu a few times. We remember him with great fondness.

As the pandemic continues, Impromptu have been unable to rehearse together, but we have been keeping in touch via zoom calls and encouraging each other to continue to play whilst mulling over what pieces we would like to play together when the opportunity arises.

Many of our members have had their first vaccinations and we are grateful to all involved in the development and delivery of them. This is the way out, but we are still urged to be cautious and so I remind everyone to take care.

Frances

As we can't play to you at the moment, here is a little musical word search to entertain you. There are 22 words for you to find.

	R	G	O	B	A	R	A	L	T	O
	A	L	S	T	A	C	C	A	T	O
	L	I	T	E	L	R	C	N	R	R
	L	S	I	M	L	E	E	D	E	A
	E	S	N	P	A	S	N	A	M	T
	N	A	A	O	R	C	T	N	O	O
	T	N	T	J	G	E	D	T	L	R
	A	D	O	I	A	N	S	E	O	I
	N	O	Z	G	N	D	K	E	Y	O
	D	R	O	N	D	O	P	E	R	A
	O	A	I	R	O	C	T	A	V	E

Allargando, accent, glissando, leggero, alto, bar, rondo, octet, opera, octave, opus, tremolo, tempo, oratorio, key, jig, DS, air, Andante, Largo, Allegro, Crescendo

Have fun!!
Impromptu

Diary for March

We may be able to hold services in church sometime soon. But whatever happens we will continue to hold online services as below. If we can add in church services too we will!

Weds 3rd	8am	Zoom Morning Prayer
	7.30pm	Lent Course via Zoom
Thurs 4th	7.30pm	Barrington PCC
Sat 6th	6pm	Through the Window via Zoom
	7.30pm	Wedding Preparation via Zoom
Sun 7th	10am	Zoom Service
<i>Lent 3</i>		
Weds 10th	8am	Zoom Morning Prayer
	2pm	Ministry Team meeting
	7.30pm	Lent Course via Zoom
Fri 12th	6pm	Wimpole PCC
Sat 13th		Diocesan Synod
	6pm	Through the Window via Zoom
Sunday 14th	10am	Youtube Service
<i>Mothering</i>	10.45am	Zoom Coffee time
<i>Sunday</i>	11.30am	Zoom All Age Service
Weds 17th	8am	Zoom Morning Prayer
	7.30pm	Lent Course via Zoom
Thurs 18th	7.45pm	Deanery Synod via Zoom
Fri 19th	7pm	Benefice Forum
Sat 20th		<i>Messy Church in a Bag available in Barrington Church porch and outside The Rectory in Orwell</i>
	6pm	Through the Window via Zoom
Sun 21st	10am	Zoom Service
<i>Lent Five</i>		
Tues 23rd	7pm	National Day of Reflection Service via Zoom

Weds 24th	8am	Zoom Morning Prayer
	7.30pm	Lent Course via Zoom
Thurs 25th	7.30pm	Croydon PCC
Fri 26th	9.30am	Joint School's end of term service via Zoom
Sat 27th	6pm	Through the Window via Zoom
Sun 28th	10am	Youtube Service
<i>Palm Sunday</i>	10.45am	Zoom Coffee time
	1.30am	Zoom Messy Church

Compline will happen on Zoom every evening at 9pm, contact me for the link.



Mothering Sunday - 14th March

Help us celebrate mothers and all who show that care to those around us.

Create a heart and put it somewhere visible – your window, garden gate, hedge...

Let's show how much we care for those who love us.

We will also have an All Age Service via Zoom at 11.30am - why not invite mothers/grandmothers/children to join us.

A Prayer for all who find Mothering Sunday painful:

We pray for mothers who watch over children who are ill
and children who watch over their suffering mothers;
We remember mothers who are apart from their children
and mothers who grieve because their children have died.

For those who longed for children and who have none
For those without their mothers because of illness or death
And who, in their longing, know themselves to be alone;
For children who are abused or neglected,
For children missing their mothers on this day
And all who suffer the impact of family breakdown
We ask that you would be a light in the darkness. Amen

Easter Garden Challenge

Many of you will have made Easter gardens on a plate in previous years – maybe when you were children...

This year we don't know what restrictions we will still have, so the church is challenging you to create one wherever you can, maybe actually in your garden in a spare corner (though of course you are welcome to do so on a plate if that works for you).

When it is looking at its best, take a photo and email it to me at fcouch@btinternet.com We will display the photos widely.

Watch out for news of our Covid safe Easter egg hunt :)

Compline

I am continuing to pray Compline each evening at 9pm to pray for all those affected by Covid, and give thanks for all that so many people are doing to help. If you would like to join me for this 15 minute service you are very welcome, contact me for the link.

Felicity

CROYDON NOTES

After the very cold wintry weather we've suffered recently let's hope we can now put that behind us and start looking forward to some brighter, warm weather encouraging us out into the garden. Spring is upon us, and we thank God for the beginning of another season and the hope of a better year ahead.

Church Services: There are still no services being held in the churches so we continue with You Tube services alternating every other Sunday with Zoom Services which are very popular and have certainly been an excellent way of reaching out to those who are shielding or unable to get out. Both these services are at 10am (please contact Felicity for the link)

Felicity continues to pray Compline every evening at 9pm on Zoom, a gentle, calming way to end the day. If you would like to join her for this 15 minute service then please contact her for the link.

Lent will be well under way by the time the March magazine news comes out. Please take a look at the 'Diary for March' section which will list all services, both Zoom and Youtube, Messy Church and the Lent Course. 'Lent in a Bag' is a bag full of goodies/resources which can be used at home or to join in with Zoom events. There is something for everyone and these bags can be found in the back of the church but if you are unable to get one then please contact Malcolm or Stephanie on 208939.

Mothering Sunday is 14th March and, as suggested in the Lent Bag, can we flood our villages with hearts!!!!...in our windows, on our fences, hanging from our trees.....paper, card, knitted, crocheted, painted, the ideas are endless!

All Saints' church continues to be open during the day for private prayer and reflection, and the Food Box is available for those who are in need. Please use it, you are most welcome.

Church Grants: After many months of applying for grants we are pleased to share some very good news. All Saints' Church has been awarded a total of £45,000 towards the cost of emergency repairs from 5 grant giving bodies which will enable the church to have the Chancel floor and crypt below made safe and repairs done to several windows which are already propped to prevent collapse. The grants are only for the church fabric.

Thanks must go to Malcolm, Percy, Felicity and Val for all their hard work and time arranging meetings with architects, structural engineers and archaeologists, filling in endless forms, umpteen phone calls, all the admin involved and a whole heap more. Well done team, your very hard work has really paid off!

The First Tuesday Group: The FTG has a Zoom meeting on 2nd March at 7.30pm and the topic is 'What is all that digging under the Church about?' To find out contact Maggie on 01223 977632 or Judith on 07774126686 to get the Zoom link.

The Croydon Community WhatsApp Group: This group continues to grow and now has 60 participants! It has been a really successful venture and has helped out many people with various problems or queries and is a wonderful way to be connected with others in the village especially during these times of lockdown.

If you would like to join this group then please contact either Keith (at Pantiles) on 07711788490 or Malcolm (at Bedlam) on 07801434603 and they will add you onto the group. You can always exit the group whenever you wish.

Prayers: As always we ask you please to remember in your prayers all those who are shielding, sick, lonely and struggling with life in these still very difficult times. Also in your prayers please remember Fred Lee who for the time being is in a care home in Bedford and we send him our best wishes. Also we pray for Janice and Jackie who have recently had operations and we thank God that they are now recovering well. SGR



Petersfield Church of England (Aided) Primary School

We hope this Parish Magazine publication finds you safe and well at this time. Throughout the lockdown, we have continued to open for critical worker children whilst providing remote learning at home for everyone else. The computer skills of pupils, parents and staff continue to develop at pace as we find different and creative ways to support and extend learning. Children and staff now confidently use the technology, for example to raise their hand or comment in the chat, and video and auditory lessons and feedback are the norm. Please do visit our Church School Page on the website - https://www.petersfield.cambs.sch.uk/site/pages/pageReact.php?page=church_school&t=1614000792 - where there is a link to an example of the Loom film recorded as part of the teaching for our latest Understanding Christianity Day.

When asked, the children identified things they have particularly enjoyed recently. These were 'Non-Screen' Mondays in Ash class; Mr Herd's virtual PE in Elm class; finding out about rocks linked to the Stone Age topic in Pine class; 'Free write Friday' in Rowan class and algebra in Yew class. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the 'Animal Experience' - paid for from the money the children raise on the FOPS 'Fun Run' last term - where they got to meet a number of interesting and unusual animals from a wildlife park. The children asked very insightful questions about the creatures. Also, the story of the Prodigal Son was retold in a variety of creative ways - such as a Lego film - as part of our Understanding Christianity Days. Most tantalising was the home Bake Off challenge completed by our eldest children in advance of Shrove Tuesday. What a shame the gorgeous creations were created at home, so we missed out on the taste test this time round! What lucky families!

Our pupils wrote and drew their fond memories of Mr Hollands, a long-time supporter and pianist to Petersfield, who will be sorely missed. Our condolences to his family and friends at this time.

We continue to benefit from the stories written by Mrs and Mr Sproule and published on our Reading for Pleasure page of the website—https://www.petersfield.cambs.sch.uk/site/pages/pageReact.php?page=reading_for_pleasure&t=1614000784

Also, the virtual code club, thanks to Mr Anderson, has ensured we can still enter the competition we had qualified for despite having to work virtually. Our thanks for the donations - money, equipment and time - that the school continues to receive from the local community. If you have a serviceable laptop or tablet that is no-longer required that could be given to a family to support remote learning, please do contact us by email office@petersfield.cambs.sch.uk or phone 01223 207382. This really does make a positive difference to our pupils and staff.

We continue to plan for the time when we can welcome all pupils back to school and, in the interim, extend our best wishes to you all. From Mrs Laura Penrose and Mrs Rachel Peachey, Co-Headteachers.

All Saints' Croydon

Our thanks to Historic England, National Churches Trust and The Wolfson Foundation, Cambridge Historic Churches Trust, Garfield Weston and AllChurches Trust who have all generously provided All Saints' Croydon with Grants towards restoration and repair.

We are indebted to these organisations as with their help we will be able to avert collapse of the Downing Crypt lying under the Chancel floor and repair several currently propped windows. Without these grants these vital works would not be possible.



Belonging, Believing; Together Succeeding

We have finally made it to half term!!!! Christmas is a very distant memory and this has felt like a very long and challenging six weeks for everyone– but half term is here at last! Although we may not be able to go out and about and enjoy school holiday in the way we are used to, at least everyone, parents and staff alike, will be able to enjoy the break from the pressure of keeping on top of school work and juggling quite so many other things at the same time.

The positive news from school is that all school staff have started twice weekly COVID testing at home. The Local Authority have provided everyone who works in school with lateral flow test kits to help detect any asymptomatic cases of COVID and help to keep the school community safer for everyone. All staff have had training on how to complete the test and so far all tests have come back negative!!! These will hopefully help to detect COVID early and help us to prevent it spreading through the school.

Over the past few weeks Mrs. Avant has been organizing a collection of goodies to take to NHS intensive care staff – we asked for donations of snacks, toiletries and treats for the hard working staff to help them through their long, tough shifts and show that we appreciate everything they are doing. The response from our families was overwhelming. Mrs. Avant had several boxes of goodies to share with the staff at both Addenbrookes and Papworth Hospitals.

At the start of February we celebrated Children's Mental Health week; this year's focus was on finding creative ways to express yourself and the children were all encouraged to try new creative activities. Throughout this second school closure we have been focusing on supporting the mental health and well-being of all the children, whether they are at home or in school. One of the strategies we have been using is weekly yoga sessions for all the children. We are extremely fortunate that one of our teaching assistants, Teresa Alderton is also a yoga teacher and she has been running yoga lessons in school, for the children who are currently able to attend school every day as well as running remote sessions over Zoom for the children who are at home. Adults in school, and some parents at home, have been joining in with the sessions as well and we have all learnt some really effective strategies to help us feel calm.

We ended the half term with a slightly unusual bring your pet assembly. Throughout this school closure we have been running whole school assemblies on Mondays and Fridays using Zoom so that both the children in school and those out of school can join in together. We have had unplanned visits into zoom lessons from several family pets over this half term and we thought it would be lovely to take the time to celebrate how important our animals are to us all. So on the last afternoon before half term, we invited our families to join us for what could be the most unusual assembly ever – the rest of the staff thought I was mad - children and animals – what could possibly go wrong!?! I have to admit it was the strangest assembly I have ever run but it was lovely to see the range of pets from a bearded dragon and preying mantis, to hamsters, guinea pigs, rabbits and lots of beautiful cats and dogs. The beauty of everyone joining remotely is that no one's pet chased or ate anyone else's!

We are all really excited with the news that all of the children can come back to school on March 8th, it has been a very long and challenging term for children, parents and school staff, and we are really looking forward to having all the children back in school where they should be.

Take care and stay safe,
Gill Davies

National Day of Reflection - Tues 23rd March

This will be the anniversary of the first National Lockdown and it has been suggested that it will be kept as a National Day of Reflection.

We will hold a service via Zoom at 7pm during which we will have an opportunity to lament the past year; the lives lost, relationships, careers and jobs affected.

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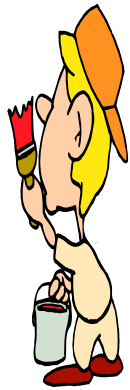
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