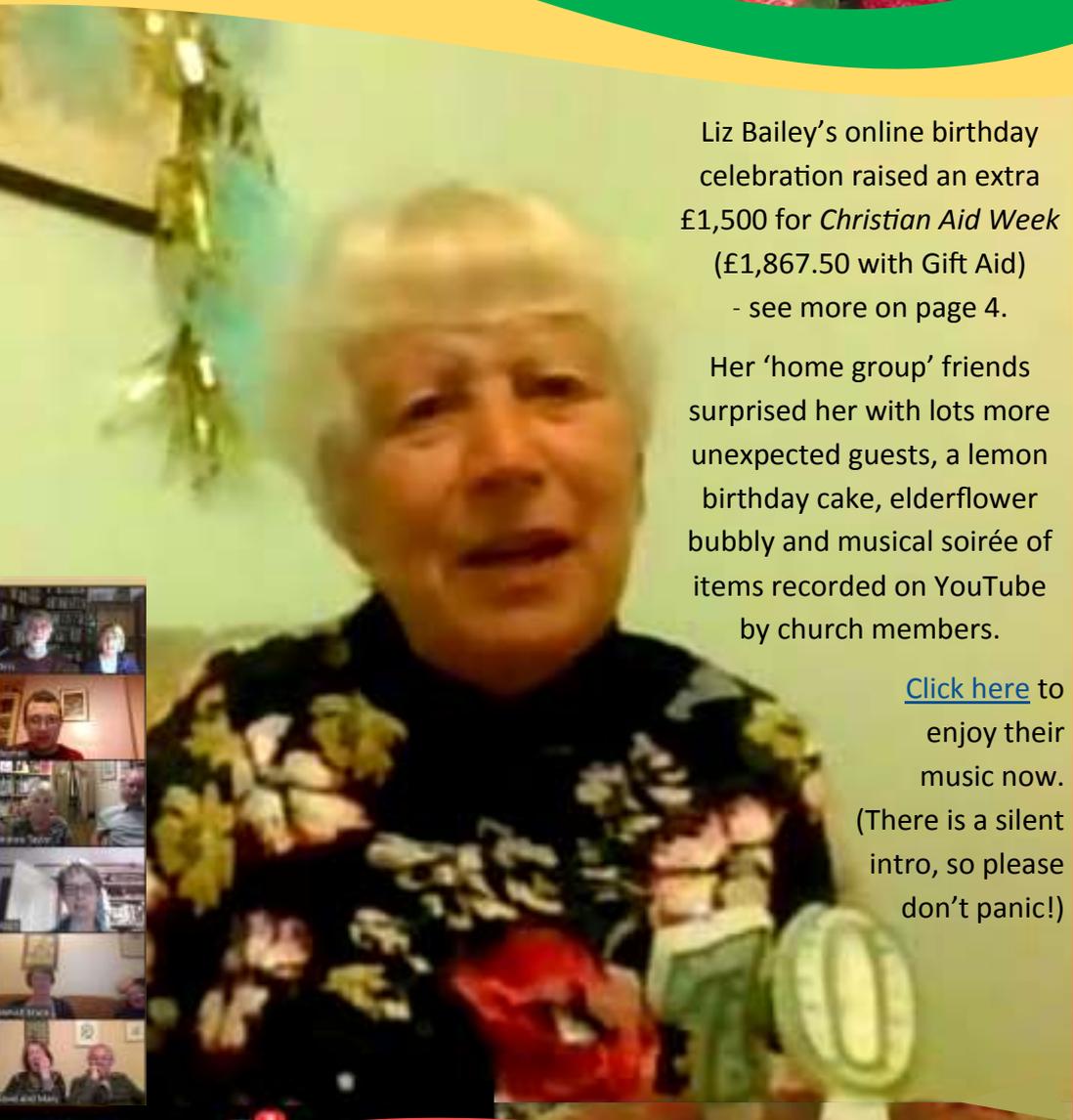


# newwt

Staying alert to keep us all safe  
online issue 4



Liz Bailey's online birthday celebration raised an extra £1,500 for *Christian Aid Week* (£1,867.50 with Gift Aid) - see more on page 4.

Her 'home group' friends surprised her with lots more unexpected guests, a lemon birthday cake, elderflower bubbly and musical soirée of items recorded on YouTube by church members.

[Click here](#) to enjoy their music now. (There is a silent intro, so please don't panic!)



Working together - See page 3

**Welcome to, hopefully, a 'Tasty' issue 4 of online NEWT.**

You - i.e. people - are what make our world taste fresh and delicious - *you are* 'the salt of the earth', said Jesus.

Amongst all its challenges, perhaps this pandemic has been helping us to rediscover the flavour and delight of our shared humanity.



Learning skills at home - See page 3

Very, very **Tasty!**

MAY 2020

St John & St Stephen's, Newtown Community Magazine

stjohnandststephen.org.uk

# Eating You're not alone

says Claire Alcock

Dear Friends,

One thing that lockdown has revealed is a desire to bake! In our house we have enjoyed chocolate cookies (very squidgy and slightly too big but you can have half at a time!) and flapjack. The flapjack reminds me of being in church physically (happy days) but it's also very good at lifting the spirits while we're at home. Eating, and particularly sitting down to eat a meal, has always had a deeper significance in the human experience than just the giving of energy to get through the tasks of the day. There's something about gladdening the heart too, which we certainly need in these times we're living through.

At home when we eat our evening meal we always give thanks before tucking in and we feel gratitude that we can eat healthy food, which in this world is not always the case for all. When we meet via Zoom for our virtual church services, it's nice to see some people bringing their coffee along; it seems to create a convivial atmosphere, even though we are unable to share bread and wine, as we would normally do on Sundays.

Someone has said that Christ is the *unseen* guest at every table, and if that is so, no one eats alone. May you find strength and God's comforting presence every time you sit to eat. And we keep praying for a time when we can gather with our wider family and once again share meals together.

Claire



## Chris Alcock's flapjack recipe

200g butter  
2 large tablespoons of syrup  
2 large tablespoons of black treacle  
100g sugar  
100g Mixed dried fruit (optional)  
At least 450g oats

Method :

1. Put on your favourite music , quite loud . Make sure you know where the bible quotation on the Tate & Lyle tin comes from, and read the strange story in Judges chapter 14 ...
2. Melt butter in saucepan - keep low heat on . Add the sugar, syrup and treacle. Add oats gradually and stir in, mixing thoroughly. When mixture is thick and in one soft lump , then transfer to baking tray.

Take a thoughtful and reflective pause, at least 1 minute. Then, using a fish slice pat the mixture flat out to the edges.

Oven bake for 17 mins at 180°C (Gas mark 4).  
Take out and leave to cool.  
Cut out into small squares.

Take some to your neighbours and share the love !

Jordan's large oats are the best, but any will do.

## Walking on with hope: lockdown WEEK 8



Presentation makes a salad:  
Spencer Tubb



Feeling loved - with doorstep deliveries from my daughter:  
Jo White



British traditional roast:  
Simon French

## Church Contacts



Vicar  
Rev Claire  
Alcock



Assoc. Priest  
Christine  
Bainbridge



Parish Centre  
Manager  
Tanya Penn



Churchwardens  
Rosie Croft &  
Ian Maynard

# WORKING TOGETHER

At the *The Hub* taking place in St John's buildings, children from the three schools in our Academy Trust have been working on a topic about Burglar Bill, which has proved great

fun for all the different ages. Here is a huge painting of Bill's town which the children created outside, working together. We're sure you'll agree it's fantastic.



## News from our local Primary Schools

This past week, families from both New Town and St John's schools have been busy playing 'Guess Who' on our respective Facebook pages. There are childhood photos of staff members posted on the New Town page, and staff hiding behind books on the St John's page. Both are really worth having a look and playing along to see who you can spot. On the St John's page, look out for the clues in the titles.

It has also been a particularly lovely week for the staff at St John's as we have had the pleasure of making

calls to all of our families. It has been great to hear how everyone is managing during the lockdown, and to hear about all of the different activities they have all been doing to use the time well.

For example, Aryansh sent us this selection of pictures that show just how busy he has been at home: learning to ride his bike properly, to create games using basic programming, helping Mum out with jobs at home, and fun sharpening his craft skills.

New Town Primary children have also sent in photos of cooking, presenting, cycling, music and art - see right and on our front page.



## Planning for a return to school

Following the government's decision to reopen schools to more children from June 1<sup>st</sup>, the staff at St John's and New Town have been busy preparing the school sites and carrying out the necessary assessments. Their priority will always be ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils, staff and families, e.g. through social distancing and thorough cleaning routines.

The Government has issued lots of guidance to schools about preparing for opening and the staff will make sure that all the recommendations are followed wherever it is feasibly possible.

After much consideration, St John's and New Town will both be closed for half term to ensure that both staff and those children who have been attending have a protected and much needed break before this next stage.

One of the enormous positives we have seen coming out of this situation is the way in which children have been working together. Not only at *The Hub*, where they are in mixed age groups, but at home too with siblings and parents, we are all finding new ways to be together, and small daily victories to be thankful for.

3



New Town School 0118 937 5509  
[admin@newtown.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@newtown.reading.sch.uk)

St John's School 0118 937 5540  
[admin@stjohns.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stjohns.reading.sch.uk)



Love never fails.  
 Coronavirus impacts all of us.  
 But love unites us all.

During this *Christian Aid Week* (10-16 May), Christian Aid has been responding to the coronavirus outbreak in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Dr Mohammad Aowfee Khan in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar – the world's largest refugee camp – writes, 'I fight every day to protect refugee families from the coronavirus. My love for the women, men and children here compels me to do everything I can for them. I know you share this love and compassion too ...'  
 On Thursday, the first two Covid-19 cases were confirmed in the camp.



*That name is so misleading*

Week 10-16 May

says Dr Rosie Croft

The very first thing to say is that, despite the name, *Christian Aid* does NOT only help Christians – but people of all faiths or none.

I have seen their work in NW Bangladesh, when we went there just over two years ago. although thankful for all they had learnt together. But now we see photos of small tea



This year, of course, we couldn't do *Christian Aid Week* house-to-house collections or our other normal fundraising events. So, *St John & St Stephen's* set up a [Just Giving page](#) with a target of £1,000.

Have a look, and you'll see we have already gone quite a long way over the target.

There's still time to donate more either there or directly on the [Christian Aid site](#).



We visited an area where the land was too dry to grow rice and there was a lot of poverty. A *Christian Aid* project got groups of women together, taught them to prepare plots of land and how to fertilise it, and then gave each household 50 tea bushes. They were waiting for growth when we saw them – plantations covering all that area and hear that the family income has more than doubled.



This is Rohim. He used to

pedal a rickshaw and some days the family went hungry. He now grows tea – and has money enough to send all four of his children to school.

There are many similar longer-term *Christian Aid* projects transforming lives throughout the world.

And because they work through local partner organisations in each country, *Christian Aid* is always one of the first agencies on the ground with emergency relief.

For example this month in Bangladesh they are delivering food parcels to day-labourers who have been in lockdown all



Above: Helping people in the majority world to fight Covid-19.

month and whose families have had no income.

You could find out more by looking at their website:

[christianaid.org.uk/our-work/where-we-work](http://christianaid.org.uk/our-work/where-we-work)

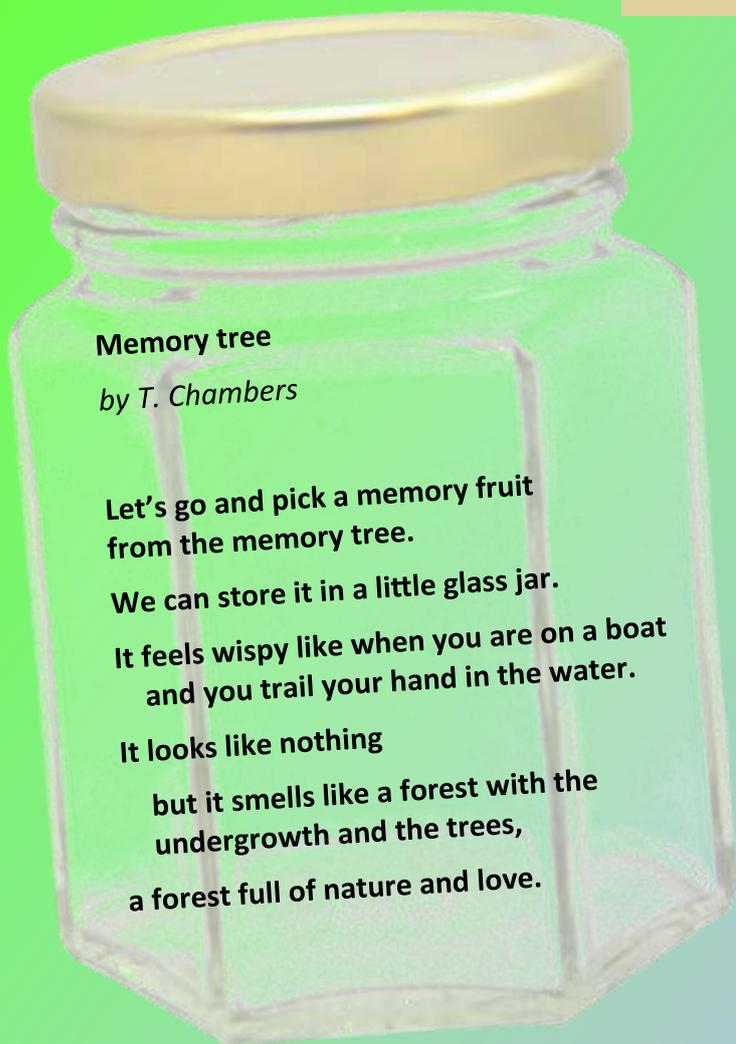
# LOCKDOWN poetry corner

During the lockdown, English teacher Stephen Dilley has been daily sharing a poem with colleagues, students and friends.

In response, some of our community have written back, sharing poems they've created. Here are three of them:

*If you would like to be added to Stephen's poems mailing list, please just e-mail Tanya at:*

[office@stjohnandststephen.org.uk](mailto:office@stjohnandststephen.org.uk)



## Memory tree

*by T. Chambers*

Let's go and pick a memory fruit  
from the memory tree.

We can store it in a little glass jar.

It feels wispy like when you are on a boat  
and you trail your hand in the water.

It looks like nothing

but it smells like a forest with the  
undergrowth and the trees,  
a forest full of nature and love.

## Time and Space

*by Spencer Tubb*

Sunrise, sunset, life's song, unrest,  
Tick-tock, motion, landscape, ocean,  
Movement, patience, dwelling, silence,  
Running, walking, listening, talking,  
Pushing, holding, loving, scolding,  
Swimming, sinking, empty, thinking,  
Sleeping, dreaming, weeping, screaming,  
Lightning, thunder, Saviour, plunder,  
Thoughts erupting, lava flowing,  
Bigger bigger, just keeps growing,

## Seagulls

*by Monika Ripley*

Seagulls finding their  
True selves in shallow waters.  
Perhaps we can too.



Brain is hurting, thoughts keep spurting,  
Life keeps moving, brain needs soothing,  
Mellow down, go to sleep,  
Life is hard, but do not weep,  
Rest your soul, anchor it,  
Let things flow, just do your bit,  
Summer days, Winter nights,  
Will always feed your appetite,  
For such is life on planet earth,  
Struggle and strife, for all it's worth,  
Time is short in the scheme of things,  
So enjoy your life and what it brings.