

TemerTalk

Delivered FREE to every household

April 2026

ROCHFORD | EASTHAM | THE HANLEYS | STOKE BLISS & KYRE | STANFORD



*Wishing all our readers
a very happy Easter*

Inside

**Plant & Produce Sale • Afternoon Tea • Pancakes
Open Garden • Frogs • Weaving
and all your parish news**

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TemeTalk

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A community going forward with God

April 2026

Published by the churches of the
Teme Valley South Group
and delivered free to every household

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Items for inclusion should be
sent to Sandra Griffiths
by the 18th of the preceding month
and will be included subject to space

Dear Readers

Real news or fake news

We are challenged with sorting out real news from fake. Is what we're told true? Is what we see on screen accurate? How do we decide?

From comments on social media, it's apparent that sometimes people decide what is true on the basis of what they think ought to be true. For example, reports about the ongoing devastation in Gaza are dismissed as "fake news" and the images computer generated by those who can't believe what is happening. Working out what is true and false is nothing new. It's just more difficult with the possibilities of modern technology. Throughout history there has been false information, or information that is only part of a bigger picture.

When we try to discover what is true, we try to get to sources as close as possible to the events being reported. (With the conflict in the Middle East, I value posts from St George's College, Jerusalem, an Anglican college, about what life is like for them.)

We try to listen for bias (conscious or unconscious) in what we're being told. Does the source of information have a particular reason to tell the story in a particular way? Is there financial gain in doing so? What are the consequences for them in the story being heard the way they are telling it?

Sources close to the event and looking for bias were critical two thousand years ago in deciding whether the resurrection of Jesus was fake news, or real. "Doubting Thomas" heard the stories and decided it was fake news until he experienced meeting the risen Jesus for himself. Others heard the stories from the eye witness accounts – accounts later recorded in the letters of St Paul and in the Gospels.

For Paul and the Gospel writers there was no financial gain in passing on the accounts of what

Continued on page 3

Many thanks to Andrew Holmes
for this month's cover photograph of
a grey wagtail taken near Eastham bridge

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07494 104781

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stokeblisskyrevillagehall@gmail.com

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Eastham –

bookings@easthammemorialhall.org.uk

Hanley – Diane Pagett, 07879 888336

hanleyvillagehall@outlook.com

Stanford – Catherine Mawby, 07831 303792



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Parish news

Teme Valley Tots

Now the main hall refurbishments at Rochford are finished we hope to resume meeting in April.

For more information about our tots group do contact Tina via email on tinaslord@gmail.com.

Confirmation

During the spring we shall be running a few sessions at Hanley Rectory for those thinking about Confirmation. This is an important step on your faith journey and is for those from 10 to 100 years old! If you would like to know more, please contact Rev'd Jen Jones, Rev'd Robert Barlow or Rev'd Julia Curtis.

Happy Easter to all in Teme Valley South

As usual we will be marking Holy Week and celebrating Easter across our local churches. So please do come along and experience something of this very special season in the Christian calendar.

Rev Julia

Dear Readers

Continued from page 1

had happened. Believing in the resurrection of Jesus didn't make for an easy life!

But for them and for countless millions since that first Easter Day, discovering that the resurrection is real news, that the promises of Jesus are reliable, was more than real news. It was, and is, Good News. Life has meaning. There is hope.

Happy Easter,

Robert

TemeTalk

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Farewell to the Blessings Group – welcome to Teme Valley Prayer

The Blessings Group which was founded in 2019 has come to a natural close after seven years of blessing, prayer, sharing and bible study. It has been a joy to bless both individuals and the wonderful region in which we live and to see members grow in their faith and relationship with our Father God.

While the Blessings Group has held its last meeting, a new prayer, intercession and blessings initiative is being birthed from the Teme Valley Filling Station which meets on the third Thursday of the month at 7.15pm in Eastham Memorial Hall. Teme Valley Prayer will focus on the Teme Valley and surrounding area from Tenbury Wells to Martley and will be non-denominational and inclusive. It will meet on the first and last Thursday of the month at 7.45pm in a local home. If you have a heart to pray for the Teme Valley area, you will be very welcome to join the group.

For further information please contact Corinne on 07976 286570 by phone, text or WhatsApp. If you intend coming to a meeting please let Richard know in advance on 07866 526940 so that we can make you welcome.

Richard Skerrett

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Rochford 49 Club

*Congratulations to this month's
£25 winners!*

Wednesday winners

18th February	No 33	Carole Powell
25th February	No 27	Not sold
4th March	No 45	Sarah Forsyth
11th March	No 14	Danny Taylor

Saturday winners

21st February	No 19	Hannah Prosser
28th February	No 23	Jean Harrison
7th March	No 19	Hannah Prosser
14th March	No 59	Not sold

As you can see from the numbers of tickets not sold, there are still plenty of numbers available – why not join in? It's just £1 per draw, plus you get two chances each week to win £25! As you can see from this month's results, you could even win twice!

Remember, you must be in it to win it!
Ring Norma Goodall on
07974 809242

TemeTalk deadline 18th April

Teme Valley Tote

March's prize draw, the 12th and last in this series, was decided when Rev'd Julia Curtis rolled the dice on 3rd March to select the set of random numbers and the starting point. Prizewinners are:

- £50 – **Family Burgoyne** of Stanford (No 566)
- £30 – **Caroline Webster** of Stoke Bliss (No 806)
- £20 – **Mr & Mrs Tom Hauge** of Knighton (No 608)

If you have any queries about the Tote, please contact Robin Dean on 01886 853295 or robin.c.dean@gmail.com – he is still looking for someone to take over its running!

A new series starts in April and your coordinators will be collecting £10 for each entry in the new series. See announcement on page 25.



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Rochford News

Rochford village hall

The refurbishment of the village hall has gone very well and is nearing completion and looking very smart. The refurbishment of the kitchen is well under way and we are installing new stainless steel commercial kitchen units and equipment. The MHDC Legacy Grant together with a very generous anonymous donation from a local charitable trust has enabled us to carry out this work which will provide a facility that should serve the community for many years to come.

We will probably need some help with cleaning and finishing work when the builders have finished, so look out for information on the WhatsApp group and please help if you can.

Pancake evening

We are planning to celebrate the hall's reopening with a rescheduled village pancake evening on Friday 17th April (if the kitchen is finished!). Just £10 a head (children half price). There will also be a raffle to support the purchase of new blinds for the windows. Everyone is welcome so please come along and support this celebration. Forget cooking that evening, there will be a wonderful selection of sweet and savoury pancakes. Please book early with Ann on 01584 781317 for this event. There is no bar so please bring your own drink.

Photo competition

There has been a good entry for the village photo competition to show Rochford's highlights but if you are quick there is still time to enter. The favourite pictures will be enlarged to decorate the walls of the newly refurbished village hall. So please join in and show what makes Rochford such a great place. The plan is to judge the pictures by public vote at the pancake evening, so please email your pictures to Andrew at andrew.barbe@btinternet.com. Please use high definition if you can.

Neighbourhood lunches

Neighbourhood lunches will resume on 28th April and 26th May in the newly refurbished village hall. Everyone welcome. Booking for lunches is essential and takeaways should be collected between 12.30 and 1pm. Please book with Ann on 01584 781317 at least the previous week.

Church flower rota

We are looking for volunteers to help with church flowers. This is not a big commitment, and involves doing altar flowers twice a month for one month a year and helping with Harvest and Christmas decorations. We are working towards more sustainable flowers. If you think you can help or even just provide flowers from your garden, please contact Ann.

Easter lilies

The church is decorated with white lilies for Easter. Donations in memory of loved ones are used to provide these beautiful Easter lilies. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Ann.

Easter in Rochford

Help with cleaning the church for Easter would be greatly appreciated. Please come along on Saturday 4th April from 2 to 3pm.

Dates for your diary

Music events – May and June tbc

Village fête – July tbc

Big Breakfast – Saturday 19th September

Harvest Festival – Sunday 11th October

Village quiz – Friday 20th November

Contacts

Ann on 01584 781317

Andrew on 07809 658484 or through the parish WhatsApp group

If you would like to be added to the parish WhatsApp group to keep you up-to-date with all village happenings, please send me your mobile number.

Andrew Barbé



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News from Stoke Bliss & Kyre

We have had a spectacular display of daffodils around the churchyard at St Peter's this spring and I hope that they have lifted your spirits as much as they have lifted mine. Their vibrant sunshine yellow is a sign of a summer still to come. Now is the time to be planning summer in your garden, so don't forget the annual plant and produce sale in late April; it is an enjoyable afternoon and an excellent place to stock up on plants for your own garden. Also, we are always looking for donations of plants and produce for the sale – see contacts below.

Our happy band of volunteer gardeners gathered for the first churchyard tidy session of the year at the end of March. New volunteers are very welcome, so do get in touch if you would like to join for any of the sessions.

Plant and Produce Sale

The annual plant and produce sale will be held at Stoke Bliss & Kyre village hall on Saturday 25th April from 2.30 to 4.30pm. This very popular sale kicks off the gardening season for many and is a great place to pick up a bargain from the wide range of perennials, annual bedding and vegetable plants on offer. Alongside the plants, look out for crafts and produce, or take time to enjoy tea and cake in the garden.

Donations of plants and produce (jams, chutneys etc) are welcome. Please contact Helen Kyle on 01885 410210 or helenvkyle@yahoo.co.uk.

Churchyard tidy sessions

Our next churchyard working party is on Friday 17th April from 10am to 12 noon, at St Peter's church, Stoke Bliss. All welcome, refreshments provided.

Social Night

Friday 24th April

Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall

Bar opens at 7, food served at 8pm

Please book food at sbkvillagehall@gmail.com

Next Social Night is Saturday 30th May for our Summer Barbecue from 4pm

TemeTalk deadline 18th April

Open Gardens returns

The Stoke Bliss & Kyre Open Gardens returns to our events programme this summer. Held on Sunday 14th June from 2 to 4pm, with varied private gardens across the village open and welcoming visitors. It is a great opportunity to look, admire and pick up ideas for your own garden. A plant sale and teas will be available at the end stop, helping to make it a full and very social afternoon.

Keeping you informed

Stay up to date with village news and events for Stoke Bliss and Kyre via the community group on Facebook – search “Stoke Bliss & Kyre Community” to join. If you are not already on the SBK email list, contact Julia Berry at sbkvillagehall@gmail.com to join.

Jeremy Wyatt



Stoke Bliss
& Kyre
NEIGHBOURHOOD
LUNCH

Thursday 9th April
Thursday 14th May
at Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall
12.30pm welcome, lunch served at 1pm
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Eastham Jottings

Church flowers and cleaning

April – Diana Clarke

There are vacancies on the rota. If you can help please contact Celia Adams on 01584 781258 or email easthamcourt@icloud.com.

Eastham Coffee Morning and seed swap

Please join us at the coffee morning on Maundy Thursday, 2nd April at 10.30am at Eastham Memorial Hall. Come along with your packets of seeds (vegetables, herbs, flowers etc) ready to swap with others. It will be just the right time before the planting season starts. Whether you have lived here for decades or just moved in, we would love to see you. It's a great chance to meet neighbours, have a laugh and this month swap some seeds before Easter! The raffle this month will be (mainly) Easter eggs.

The rota is

2nd April – Josie Ward

7th May – Diana Clark

Eastham's annual pumpkin competition

If you want to be in with a chance of winning top prize at Eastham's annual pumpkin competition (and not let the glory go elsewhere) you will need to plant the seed during April/May and keep plants well-watered. No time to waste!

Mothering Sunday

We remembered mothers everywhere at our Mothering Sunday service on 15th March and visited a few afterwards. Props from the workshops at Lindridge School last November, choreographed by Mel Cumming, were used. Local daffodils gathered from Eastham's orchards were given out to all mothers. £130 collected at the service was donated to Acorns Hospice and Pete Thorp's delicious home-made biscuits were a great hit. Thanks to everyone for helping, reading and singing!

Pilates, yoga and fitball at the Memorial Hall

Sue and Zoe are celebrating five years since the completion of the new hall. Zoe used the hall last month for a weekend retreat. Classes start again after Easter. Fitball classes are going well, watch this space for next term's dates. Find out more at www.pilatesforall.co.uk and www.zedyoga.co.uk or contact Zoe via info@zedyoga.co.uk, Sue via sue@pilatesforall.co.uk and Michelle for fitball on 07837 359403.

Pub Night

Join us for a quiet drink at pub night on Friday 17th April at 7pm at Eastham Memorial Hall. Thanks to everyone for the lively quiz at the March pub night – well done to all the winners!

Church and churchyard spring clean

Please come and help with tidying up the churchyard on Saturday 18th April from 10am to 12.30pm followed by a barbecue. We will be tidying up the inside of the church at the same time. Please bring garden utensils, dusters and mops. Everyone welcome, creche available!

Teme Valley Tote – final call for payments

Payment is due on 1st April for the next 12 draws for prizes of £50, £30 or £20 per month.

Get cash please as soon as possible to Celia Adams. Online payments accepted, please contact Celia for bank details on 01584 781258 or email easthamcourt@icloud.com .

Thanks to Robin for arranging the tote every year.

Eastham freestyle litter pick

Thanks to everyone who joined the merry band of litter pickers on Saturday 14th March to clean up Eastham's roads. Special thanks to Sarah Breen, Jill Collison and Paul Meier for arranging all the practicalities including the fantastic refreshments – a perfect reward for a morning's hard work!

Eastham Memorial Hall AGM

This public meeting is on Monday 18th May at 7pm and is open to all Eastham residents.

Villagers wishing to join as trustees should contact Celia Adams (01584 781258) or email admin@easthammemorialhall.org.uk for an information pack. Nominations are required by Thursday 30th April (14 days in advance of the AGM).

The public meeting is open to all Eastham residents and there will be a Zoom/Teams link for those not able to attend in person. Please contact Celia Adams in advance for the link details. The accounts will be posted on the website in advance of the AGM.

Celia Adams

See more Eastham Jottings on page 10

Advertise your event FREE in TemeTalk and reach 700 households in seven parishes

Hanley Happenings

Quiz and Curry

We had a fabulous night at the Hanley village hall Quiz and Curry evening on 28th February. It was nip and tuck between the two top teams all the way with The Backhanders stealing the win by one point over Gardeners' World in the final round. Thanks to everyone who attended and made it a great night and particular thanks to Tracey, Mark and Derek for their help on the evening. We are also very grateful to The Backhanders who donated their winnings back to the hall. We can't wait for the next quiz when perhaps it will be Gardeners' Revenge!

Litter pick

March's litter pick was loyally supported by several local people: after a successful clean up they enjoyed their free lunch. No one can understand why people have to throw chip shop containers, McDonald's cups and cans out of their car windows.

Free lunch

1st April is our final free lunch from 12 noon to 3pm. This will also be a plant swap and Q & A with our local gardening expert Sam Garness. We look forward to seeing you then.

Hanley Village Hall Table Tennis Club

Improve your reactions and keep fit in a very sociable environment. All ages, any gender, whether you have never held a bat or you're a seasoned player, all are welcome. Just come along to one of our sessions on Monday evenings from 7 to 9pm. No need to book, we'll be very happy to welcome you to our group. The first session is a free taster session. Then pay and play for just £3 per session.

Open garden

Anna Fletcher will open her garden on 23rd May in aid of The Alzheimer's Society. Anna's garden is always a pleasure to see and her plants for sale are always of the highest quality. More details in next month's TmeTalk.

Carole Gardner

Hanley Broadheath WhatsApp Group



Scan this QR code using your WhatsApp camera to join the group

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Services in Stanford

Thursday 2nd April

Maundy Thursday service at 6.30pm with choir

Sunday 5th April

Dawn Service at 6am with Holy Communion

Sunday 3rd May

Holy Communion with hymns at 10am

Flowers for Easter

Sarah, Helen and Alexandra.

Refreshments will be served after the service on 5th April.

Mill Farm Country Retail

The Sparey team has been working hard to finish the new garden centre for Baileys and Angel Gardens – watch out for the new business opening soon after the traumatic fire just over a year ago. Louise Mawditt, who took on the shop, and her team are looking forward to their new location.

Teme Valley Tote

If you missed out on Cheltenham Races but would like a flutter on a tote draw for a cash prize of £50, £30 or £20 there is still time to sign up for our Teme Valley Tote in aid of the local TVS churches. Please contact Robin Dean by email at robin.c.dean@gmail.com or Alexandra on 07891 346783.



Churchyard working party

A churchyard working party will take place on Saturday 25th April from 10am to 12 noon. Coffee and biscuits will be served. Hope you can come along – many hands make light work and we will achieve more.

If you would like to help for an hour or just come another day and tidy up or cut grass for an hour or so please let Alexandra know on 07891 346783.

Stanford Fête

Stanford Fête for the village hall and St Mary's church will be held on Saturday 6th June from 1 to 7pm at Orleton Court, by kind permission of Tom and Amber Spilsbury. If you can help at this event, would like to run an activity or have a stand, please contact Sue Softly on 07929 479865 or Alexandra Winnington on 07891 346783.

Bar, tombola, lucky dip, game stalls, tug of war, dog show, bric-a-brac, face painting, refreshment marquee and more!

Food Bank

Our box for Tenbury Food Bank will be in a more central location very soon. There is a local food bank box at St Mary's church if you wish to donate to the local area in Stanford.

As I write this the sun is shining and it is warm. Such a wonderful feeling, let's hope we have a sunny few months ahead.

As you can see from our photograph above, the daffodils are once again filling the churchyard at St Mary's and brightening the grass verges all the way down the hill.

Alexandra Winnington

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More Eastham Jottings

Save the date for Eastham Fête

Eastham Fête will be on Sunday 16th August starting at 12 noon.

Last year's fête was a tremendous success, thanks to the time, effort and generosity of so many people behind the scenes. As always, proceeds have been distributed in line with the fête constitution to support both the church and the Memorial Hall. While the fête raises valuable funds, these are carefully allocated each year and are not an ongoing source for wider commitments. However we are pleased to support occasional community initiatives at the Memorial Hall with initial set-up costs. The fête committee will once again be hosting a community barbecue in June at the Memorial Hall – everyone is very welcome.

Looking ahead to this year's fête, we are planning all the usual stalls and attractions and would greatly appreciate help with staffing stalls, car parking and setting up on the weekend. We would also love to build on last year's success with even more tractors, vintage vehicles, old farm implements or working engines – and we even have space for a heavy horse or two!

If you would like to be involved or bring something along, please get in touch sooner rather than later at easthamfete@gmail.com, or speak to Celia, Jane or David.

Keep an eye out for further updates.

Kyre Park Garden



The Park consists of five lakes, waterfalls, follies, a Grade II listed Jacobean barn, a ruin and a Norman dovecote

Open daily 10am to 5pm

Suggested donation of £3.50

Dogs are welcome in the Park
and allowed off leads if kept under control
No cycles allowed in the grounds

Kyre Park, Tenbury Wells WR15 8RW

Eastham telephone box

Many thanks to Diana Clarke and Ann Hadfield for keeping the box going for book swaps. It is a great facility – take a look. When available, pick up some apples, kidney beans etc in exchange for donations. Thanks to Simon and Alison Neary for donations from sales to the Memorial Hall.

Lamberts Family Grocers

The mobile shop calls at Eastham Memorial Hall every Wednesday at around 10.30am. Mike carries Ashley's Bakery, Wyre Pie etc.

Celia Adams

Activities at Eastham Memorial Hall

- Pilates – on Tuesdays at 1.10 and 2.20pm. For details or a taster session please contact Sue on 07974 343609 or sue579@icloud.com. New term starts on 14th April.
- Yoga – every Wednesday at 10am. Ring Zoe on 07962 981456 or see www.zedyoga.co.uk. Taster sessions available. New term starts on 6th April.
- Rejuven8 Fitness and Wellbeing fitball class – on Thursdays from 1.30 to 2.30pm. An exercise class using yoga balls to help improve posture and balance, build strength, flexibility and co-ordination. Please contact Michelle on 07837 359403 to book your place.

The Filling Station

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 16th April at Eastham Memorial Hall at 7.15 for a 7.30pm start.

Our speaker will be Bob Saunders. Bob is from Somerset and became a Christian in the 1980s after reluctantly going with his family to a Billy Graham event! Since that time he has had a heart to tell others about Jesus. About 12 years ago he received a gift of healing and has seen many people healed as a consequence. Bob is now in his 70s but continues to see people being healed and coming to faith wherever he goes. Do join us in welcoming Bob to our meeting and bring along anyone who would value his healing ministry and see how Jesus reveals how much they are loved by Him.

We look forward to your joining us for these evenings of fellowship, worship, teaching and refreshments. If you are not on our mailing list and would like further information please contact me on kate.harley6@gmail.com.

Is it going to rain? Ask a frog

If you want to know if it's going to rain, listen out for frogs. Croaking frog calls have long been taken as a sign of approaching rain and the louder the croaks, the more rain there will be.

Frogs were used as animal weather forecasters long ago in Switzerland and Germany. A frog was housed in a tank partly filled with water and given a small ladder. If the frog climbed up the ladder, fine weather was on the way – the higher the frog climbed, the better the weather would be. But before wet weather arrived, the frog would come down its ladder into the water. The belief in the frog forecasts led German meteorologists to be nicknamed "Wetterfrösche" meaning "weather frogs".

How frogs sense imminent rain is thought to be through atmospheric pressure. In Darwin, in tropical north Australia, green tree frogs strike up loud mating calls just before rain falls, an act thought to be triggered by a drop in atmospheric



pressure.

Frog mating calls can signal changes in temperature. During spring in the high Sierra Nevada in California, ice and snow begin to melt in ponds and lakes and male Sierra tree frogs then jump into action in the ice-free waters and begin making mating calls to attract females. But there is only a limited time for mating and for the females to lay their eggs before the waters freeze again, sometimes only a couple of months later.

A recent study also found that male frogs change their tune throughout the mating season. At the start, the male calls are slower and less frequent, but as the waters warm up, their calls become faster and more frequent, which is more attractive to the females. The female frogs pick up from the change in the males' croaks that the water is warm enough for them to lay their eggs. And with such a short season for mating and egg-laying, the warming of the waters is crucial.

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Prince William leaves Josie “flabbergasted”

“I’ve danced with a man, who’s danced with a girl, who’s danced with the Prince of Wales” goes the old song. Well, I’ve talked with a girl who’s talked with the Prince of Wales!

Last month we went to Cornwall with the Boss’s brother and his wife, Richard and Caroline, to spend a weekend at their holiday cottage in Mullion. On Saturday a friend of Caroline’s came for coffee and told us all about it.

On the previous Thursday she had telephoned Gear Farm Pasty Company, an award-winning family-run farm and bakery at Helston, to order pasties for her freezer. The farm is down a long and winding lane and she wanted to make sure they had enough for her before she went.

Her order was taken by a man she didn’t recognise. When he asked her name she said “Josie”. “Juicy?” he replied and she said, “No, it’s Josie”. He said, “Sorry Josie, I thought you said Juicy. The pasties will be juicy!”

It was only when Josie went to Gear Farm later in the day to collect her pasties that she was “flabbergasted” to learn that her order had been taken by the Prince of Wales.

The telephone call and the Prince’s mistake were soon all over the news. Josie said that children at her granddaughters’ school had heard



Prince William taking Josie’s order

about it and even her son in Australia.

Look it up, it’s on the internet. And why not give me a call? Then you will be able to say, “I’ve talked with a girl* who talked with the Prince of Wales”.

The Prince was visiting Cornwall to meet with communities affected by January’s Storm Goretta. He began his visit at Gear Farm where he made pasties and took orders before going on to meet emergency teams at Helston Fire Station.

SG

**I use the word “girl” loosely here to match the words of the song!*

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The preview is on Monday 25th May from 2.30 to 8.30pm.

It would be wonderful to see you there.

Deadline for the next issue of TemeTalk is 18th April

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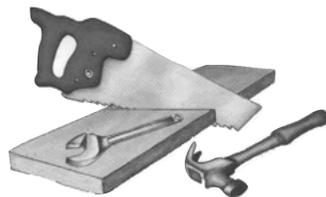
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Dear Henry, love from Grandad

A few years ago I was asked by my grandson's teacher to write to him with some advice for the future. After much deliberation, this is what I wrote:

"Dear Henry

Your school teacher has asked me to write to you with my best thoughts about you – not the thoughts I have when you are very very angry!

When you arrived in 2008 I was very pleased ... even delighted.

I was particularly delighted because you were the first baby born in your generation of our family. Not only that, you are the oldest son of the oldest son (your dad) whose dad (that's me) was also the oldest son of your great grandad (my dad) who was also the oldest son, born in 1903, so this is a pattern for you to follow which has held true

for more than 120 years!

Your dad, your grandad and your great grandad have all had long and happy marriages which sustained a solid family home for their children to grow up in and enjoy. I hope that in years to come you will be able to do the same.

I am also pleased that you enjoy sport and have had some success on the football pitch. I hope you continue this as you grow up. Some of my closest friends are people I met and played sport with years ago. It's not just the game that matters, it's also the friendships you make and also the ability to lose with good grace.

I hope that in the future you will enjoy good health, look after your sisters and your mum and dad. Work hard and enjoy the results.

Your affectionate Grandad"

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Ancient stories for contemporary wisdom

Welcome back to this series of short articles which look at ancient stories and how we can draw from them wisdom for living today. This second article again looks at the Genesis story right at the very beginning of time.

The story depicts God creating the world with light and dark, land and water, plants, seeds, fish and birds. On Friday morning wild animals and livestock are made. Then after that, God creates humans. The narrative depicts us as being a Friday afternoon job!

Nevertheless, the story-teller describes us as being made "in the image of God". God makes something a bit like Godself – and that applies

equally to male and female – and gives humanity a role to fulfil. That role is described differently in various translations of the story (the earliest written version of the story was in Hebrew). Commonly the role is described as filling the earth, subduing it and having dominion over it. That interpretation has led to significant destruction of natural ecosystems and damage. But a more nuanced understanding of the original text suggests that "replenish" is a better translation of "mala" – the Hebrew word – than "fill", that "subdue" does not mean "exploit". If humans are to have "dominion" (that word is derived from the Latin word for "lord") then the Christian understanding of what "Lordship" should be like is found in looking at the life of Jesus as Lord of all who became the servant of all.

Ancient wisdom tells us that humanity's role – our role, male or female – in creation is not to exploit but to cherish. That is something that the second story of creation in the next chapter of Genesis develops. It's something we'll look at more fully in a future article.

Robert Barlow

The narrative depicts us as being a Friday afternoon job



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ON STAGE



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ON SCREEN



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ON SCREEN



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ON STAGE



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Three robots went to mow ...

The rain just kept falling, all through January and then all through February and then March started with some very wet days. At least it should calm the water companies with aquifers and reservoirs full to the brim. Now the sun has made an occasional appearance and the temperature is rising so our puddles have changed to grass and the grass has started to grow.

Here's the thing. The grass needs cutting.

For many years we had a ride-on mower and it took nearly a day a week through the summer to get round and keep the place presentable. That's a day's work, some fuel plus an annual maintenance cost. It all mounts up.

In 2020 we decided to try a new system, not quite "artificial intelligence" but certainly a boost to productivity – robots.

We spoke to Husqvarna, a Swedish company where a Q is not necessarily followed by a U.

We now have a team of three and each has a dedicated area. In good times they carry on independently and keep the grass cut and everything tidy. But after such a wet winter they do hit problems. Their little wheels get stuck on mole hills, in puddles, caught out on hedge cuttings and with the ground so wet they can just keep the wheels turning but going nowhere until the battery runs out. Starting the season is always a bit hit or miss.

For each of these issues they ask for help, that is someone to rescue them, to enter their secret code and lift them from the hazard and press "go".

They have entirely random routes so initially the lawns look a mess with some parts cut nicely and some not touched at all. Over three or so weeks they do get to visit everywhere and the grass looks more presentable. One trick they have when finding a patch of extra long grass is to stop travelling in straight lines but instead start a circle, slightly increasing its size with each rotation.

In good times they can be fully monitored on an app from an armchair in my sitting room where I can control start and stop times, where to start mowing, how short to cut the grass. When tired they return automatically to their charging station and recharge.

We have named them after our American grandchildren, Henry, Megan and Annabel. Henry is now nearly six and he has travelled over thirteen thousand miles and worked for eleven thousand hours without leaving his one acre patch. The girls are a year younger and have not been quite so busy.

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Creamy Tuscan chicken



Try this absolutely delicious Tuscan chicken dish. Serve with roast or mashed potatoes, rice or pasta. Serves 4

Ingredients

2 tbsp plain flour
1 tbsp smoked paprika
2 tsp dried oregano
4 skin-on chicken fillets
80g sundried tomatoes, chopped,
plus 1 tbsp oil from the jar (or use olive oil)
4 garlic cloves, finely grated or crushed
125ml white wine
250ml chicken stock
200g spinach
150ml double cream
75g grated parmesan

Method

Combine the flour, paprika and oregano in a bowl, add the chicken breasts and toss to coat.

Heat the oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat and cook the chicken breasts, skin-side down, for 4-5 mins until the skin is golden brown. Turn over and cook for another 4-5 mins until golden on both sides. Remove to a plate and set aside.

Scatter in the sundried tomatoes and garlic and cook for 1 minute, then add the wine and cook for 2-3 minutes until the alcohol has evaporated. Return the chicken to the pan, then pour in the stock and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the spinach and cook for a further 5-10 minutes until the chicken has cooked all the way through and the spinach has wilted. Pour in the double cream, stir in half the parmesan and cook for 1-2 minutes to heat through. Serve the chicken over cooked rice, if you like, with the remaining parmesan and parsley sprinkled over the top.

Once fully cooled, the Tuscan chicken can be frozen for up to a month. Freeze in an airtight container and defrost fully overnight in the fridge before gently reheating covered on the hob on a low-medium heat until piping hot.

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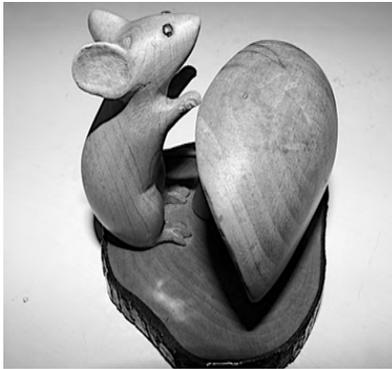
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Teme Valley Wildlife

"Appley Dapple, a little brown mouse, goes to the cupboard in somebody's house" wrote Beatrix Potter of the wood mouse, a creature known for helping itself to apples in store for the winter. The wood mouse is the most widespread of small British mammals but hasn't been given a very apt name because it is more likely to be found in grasslands, hedgerows and gardens than in woods. It is an attractive quick-witted character possessed of shiny black eyes, large ears and a long tail which has black hairs above and white hairs below. Wood mice do like apples though, alongside a wide range of nuts, seeds, shoots, berries, insects, caterpillars and small snails.

Wood mice don't hibernate, they are active all year round and like to carry their food to a place where it can be eaten in safety. In common with voles, they often repurpose old birds' nests as dining tables. When eating hips, haws and elderberries they aim for the seeds, leaving the flesh



behind whilst voles do the opposite, preferring the flesh and discarding the seeds. Nature has a niche for every activity, but whether mice and voles work together when dining I haven't been able to find out.

Wood mice breed rapidly, reaching maturity at only seven to eight weeks old and are capable of having as many as five litters a year. They nest underground and burrow to create lairs beneath tree stumps and within thickets from which they emerge at night to forage for food. Despite their ubiquity, they stay out of human sight but may be detected by their footprints. Like all rodents, they have four toes on the front feet and five on the back, but their long tails can leave a long thin line of a print behind their footsteps, revealing their identity. Their main predators are tawny owls and weasels.

In 1894 a closely related species was discovered which looks very similar to the wood mouse

Continued on page 24

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and was formerly included with it. A new species called the yellow-necked mouse was described. It was distinguished from the wood mouse by having a more pronounced band of yellow fur across its chest. Such mice are only found in southern England, south of a line drawn from the Mersey to the Wash. They favour the Severn valley, so are likely to live around here. Yellow-necked mice are far less common than ordinary wood mice, making up only 2% of the total "wood" mouse population.

The reason I wanted to write about them this month is that, like Beatrix Potter, I found that wood mice had gone to my cupboard. Two opportunists had entered my kitchen from under the sink. This has sometimes happened before, because my kitchen bin lives there and a few crumbs can drop down below. On this occasion though, my two visitors had crossed the kitchen, scaled a

dresser and enjoyed themselves in my vegetable drawer. Onions and garlic they ignored, three carrots they sampled, but with an avocado pear they'd had a banquet. Whilst not on the designated list of known wood mouse food it was clearly an exotic item which they relished. Who would have thought it?

The next meeting of the Teme Valley Wildlife Group will be at 7.30pm on Thursday 9th April at Stoke Bliss and Kyre Village Hall. We welcome John Lightfoot whose talk is called "Shropshire Owls". All members and friends are welcome, it is just £3 on the door.

Stephanie Mcroft

For up-to-date information on what wildlife is being seen in the area, or to give us your sightings or comments, please visit our Facebook page. Our programme of events, newsletter and bird survey are available on our website at www.teme-valley-wildlife.org We hold meetings on the second Thursday of the month January to November. All are welcome.

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Teme Valley Tote

A new series of the Teme Valley Tote starts this month. The last series paid out £1,200 to lucky winners and £3,460 was given to the parishes of Teme Valley North and Teme Valley South.

Again this year the price of each subscription is £10 – for this you will be entered in each of 12 monthly draws with the possibility of winning £50 or £30 or £20 each month

Your local Teme Valley South co-ordinators are:

- Eastham – Celia Adams
- Stanford – Alexandra Winnington
- Stoke Bliss and Kyre – Margaret Yarnold

If you have internet banking you can subscribe by Bank Giro Credit. The account name is North Teme Group of Churches Tote Account, sort code 20-39-64, account number 30947539.

Please put your name and district as a reference and email me at robin.c.dean@gmail.com.

If you currently pay by standing order, you will automatically be entered. If there is any problem I will contact you when these come in on 1st April. If you wish to pay by standing order I can send you the form.

Or you can send a cheque made payable to North Teme Group of Churches Tote Account to me (Robin Dean) at Rectory Cottage, Stanford Bridge, Worcester WR6 6ST

If you have any queries about the Tote, please contact me on 01886 853295 or email robin.c.dean@gmail.com

Robin Dean
Teme Valley Tote Organiser



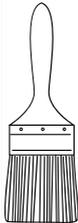
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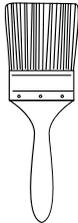
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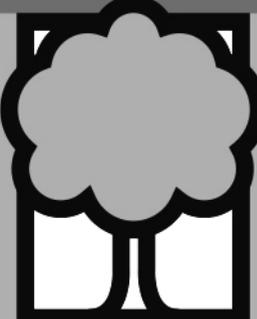
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TemeTalk

Deadline 18th April

Please note this is the *last* day for
contributions – the sooner you send
your items to the editor, the more
chance there is that they will be included

Please send items for inclusion to
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What's on in Teme Valley South

April

- 1st Wednesday Free lunch, Gardeners' Question Time and plant swap, Hanley VH, 12 noon
- 2nd Thursday Eastham Coffee Morning and seed swap, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am
- 9th Thursday Stoke Bliss & Kyre Neighbourhood Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre VH, 12.30pm
- 11th Saturday Weaving course, Hollow Meadow, Stoke Bliss, 10am
- 12th Sunday Open Garden, Lower House Farm, Vine Lane WR15 8RL, 11am-4pm
- 17th Friday Pancake Evening, Rochford Village Hall
Churchyard tidy session, St Peter's Stoke Bliss, 10am
Pub Night, Eastham Memorial Hall, 7pm
- 18th Saturday Church and churchyard tidy, Eastham church, 10.30am
Afternoon tea, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 3.30pm
- 24th Friday Social Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 7 for 8pm
- 25th Saturday Plant and Produce Sale, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 2.30pm
Churchyard working party, St Mary's Stanford, 10am
- 28th Tuesday Rochford Neighbourhood Lunch, Rochford Village Hall, 12.30pm

May

- 2nd Saturday Beltane Spring Celebration, Hollow Meadow, Stoke Bliss, 11am
- 3rd Sunday Open Garden, Lower House Farm, Vine Lane WR15 8RL, 11am-4pm
- 7th Thursday Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am
- 10th Sunday Stoke Bliss spring walk – details to follow
- 14th Thursday Stoke Bliss & Kyre Neighbourhood Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre VH, 12.30pm
- 18th Monday Eastham Memorial Hall AGM, Eastham Memorial Hall, 7pm
- 26th Tuesday Rochford Neighbourhood Lunch, Rochford Village Hall, 12.30pm
- 30th Saturday Summer Barbecue, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, bar open from 4pm

June

- 4th Thursday Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am
- 6th Saturday Stanford Fête, Orleton Court, 1pm
- 11th Thursday Stoke Bliss & Kyre Neighbourhood Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre VH, 12.30pm
- 14th Sunday Stoke Bliss Open Gardens. 2 to 4pm
Open Garden, Lower House Farm, Vine Lane WR15 8RL, 11am-4pm
- 20th Sunday Teme Valley Wildlife Group Bioblitz, Hollow Meadow, Stoke Bliss, 11am

Send items for inclusion to Sandra Griffiths by 18th of the previous month

telephone 07482 482629

or email ronsmum@icloud.com

Services

April/May 2026

Daily prayer continues at 9am and 7pm on Zoom, contact Rev'd Julia if you would like to join us.

The Church of England has a pre-recorded weekly on-line service which can be found by searching 'Church of England Weekly Services' or accessed on their website www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online/weekly-online-services

Services Schedule

Thursday 2nd April

6.30pm Stanford Church

Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday Service with the Relishing Rural Choir
(includes stripping the altars and foot washing)

Friday 3rd April Good Friday

10am to 2pm Kyre Church
2 to 3 Kyre Church
10am to noon Shelsley Village Hall
1.00pm St Kenelm's Church, Clifton

Stations of the Cross
Holy Communion (with reserved sacrament)
Passion Play film
Devotional Hour

Sunday 5th April

6am Stanford Church
9.30am Hanley Childe
10am Stoke Bliss Church
10am Rochford Church

Easter Day

Dawn Service with Holy Communion
Easter Fun for All
Holy Communion
Holy Communion

Sunday 12th April

9.30am Stoke Bliss Church
11am Hanley William Church

Holy Communion
Baptism

Sunday 19th April

10am Eastham Church
2pm

All Age Worship and Holy Communion
Walking Church

Sunday 26th April

10am Rochford Church
4pm Kyre Church

All Age Worship and Holy Communion
Celtic Evening Service

Sunday 3rd May

10am Stanford Church

Holy Communion with hymns

Thursday 7th May

7pm Abberley Hills Vineyard
Mill Orchard, Great Witley

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