

# The Baldons and Nuneham Courtenay Newsletter



**May 2021**

## FROM REVEREND TERESA STEWART-SYKES

The seasons are changing, spring and warm sunshine are beckoning me into the Vicarage garden and away from my laptop and zoom meetings! We are all gradually emerging from lockdown, getting haircuts and enjoying a pint or two outside a pub! And of course we are in the Easter season when the Christian church reflects on new life, resurrection and renewal.

The Rev'd Paul Wignall (Team Vicar of Clifton Hampden, Culham and the Wittenhams) has been thinking about all of this and writes:

Here's the first verse of my favourite Easter hymn (written by Michael Forster and sung to the Battle Hymn of the Republic):

From the very depths of darkness springs a bright and living light;  
out of falsehood and deceit a greater truth is brought to sight;  
in the halls of death, defiant, life is dancing with delight!  
The Lord is risen indeed!

Of course it's been a tough twelve months, and the hard times aren't really over yet. Many people have been in difficult places, a lot are still there. There's been denial and confusion, there's been amazing patience, skill and a great many people have had to work up to and beyond exhaustion. Dark times indeed. But shot through with light as families and strangers, friends and neighbours, expected and unexpected, have stepped forward and made a difference.

One thing that's struck me is just how creative individuals and communities have been, as though lockdown has unlocked imagination and social distance has revealed our common existence. One day we must find a way of saying thank you to the unsung heroes and the silent heroines, who weren't looking to make a fast buck or be the object of praise; they simply got on and made a difference.

So I'm heartened by the creative imagination of so many. But I shouldn't really be surprised. It's how people are when they are given a chance to be their best. It's how human society works. It's how the world works. It's how (let me say it) God works: simply open up a space for things to happen, and they will – not all will be good things, but some will, and, in the long run, they will win out. If that wasn't true there wouldn't be a world, or a town, a field or a house, a book, painting or even a kiss. We sometimes talk about God making things, but that's not really how the Bible puts it. In the beginning God made a space and then said, "let there be..." light, dark, sun, moon, fishes, animals, birds, trees and humans. Or as a Jewish tradition has it, "God... made the world make itself."

We aren't the passive channels of creation, we are its instruments: making things happen in the great spaces of life where everything is possible. If we learn that from the past twelve months, then anything is possible – new ways of living in community, in family, on this beautiful blue-green planet. So just give life a chance



– your life and the life of the world – then things will happen, and, one way or another, they will be, as the creative God pronounces, “good... good... very good.”

Or as the poet e.e.cummings writes:

sing) for it's Spring....

you and i may not hurry it...

but nobody will stop it

With All The Policemen In The World

I hope that the next few months find us all discovering within ourselves gifts to help us on our roadmap out of this pandemic and that we might take with us all that we have learned on this crazy journey to build better, more caring and more resilient communities.

***The Revd Teresa Stewart-Sykes is Team vicar for The Baldons with Nuneham Courtenay, Berinsfield and Drayton St Leonard.***

e-mail: [RevTeresa@outlook.com](mailto:RevTeresa@outlook.com) and tel: 07823 809112

***The Revd Jennifer Morton is Associate Team Vicar and lives in Toot Baldon:***  
*[jennifer@morton8.co.uk](mailto:jennifer@morton8.co.uk)*

***Our current curate is The Revd Sorrel Shamel-Wood who lives in Berinsfield.***

***Our safeguarding officer is Sara McDouall: [saramcdouall@gmail.com](mailto:saramcdouall@gmail.com)***

**A clergy person can always be reached in a pastoral emergency by ringing the Dorchester Team Office 01865 340007**

This beautiful spring image of our local bluebells was sent in by Mary Pie.





## CARDS FOR SALE IN AID OF CHURCH FUNDS

Each pack contains one card of each of the four designs as below:



Available to purchase from St Peter's Marsh Baldon  
and St Lawrence's Toot Baldon

£5 per pack – please place payment in the wall safe

**Death of HRH Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh**  
**The Parish Council has conveyed its condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal family.**

### Planning applications

#### Solar farm

Developers have submitted additional information in support of their planning application for the solar farm. It includes information on the impact of the development on heritage assets and minor improvement to biodiversity. None of this has led to a change in the Parish Council's objections to the impact on the Green Belt and the overall unsuitability of the site.

Consultation on the application closes at the end of April and the planning officer will be making a recommendation to SODC in May taking account of the competing planning policies of protecting the Green Belt from inappropriate development and supporting alternative energy sources.

New Farm House, Toot Baldon: P21/S1156/HH An application for minor amendments to an already agreed planning application for changes to the house. The Parish council will be responding.

### Waste bin

The general waste bin near the Seven Stars has increasingly been filled to overflowing leading to complaints to the council. Following a request to SODC, a larger lidded bin will be provided and sited closer to the road.

### Council meetings

During lockdown emergency government legislation has allowed council meetings to be run remotely by video conferencing. This legislation is due to lapse in April and councils have been informed of the need to return to normal meeting format in public unless the government extends the legislation. This is causing some confusion as not all public venues i.e. village halls and council buildings may be available in time in accordance with the government's timetable for the staged release from lockdown.

The Parish Council will be clarifying the availability of the village hall for future meetings but may need to continue to meet by Zoom until things are clearer. Information will be on the published agenda.

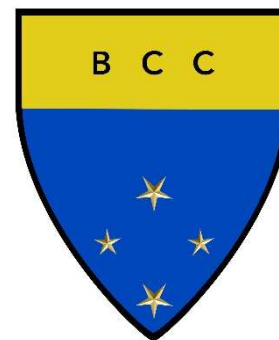
Date of Next meeting: May 10<sup>th</sup>, 7.30 pm Annual General meeting of the Council plus business meeting. Venue to be notified on the agenda.



**This month's cover photo shows one of Lizie's Country Bunches: see advert on page 7**



## BALDONS CRICKET CLUB: START OF THE SEASON



千里之行，始於足下

-Laozi, Tao Te Ching, 6th Century BC

Without overindulging in the wonders of philosophy, let us think of life as a voyage. At times, a simple stroll. At others, a seemingly never-ending cycle of uphill hikes in gale force wind. More recently perhaps, a meandering lockdown-enforced amble under grey skies. As we tentatively return to normality, if such a stasis exists, Laozi's words seem truer than ever. To translate, for those that prefer their mandarin tossed liberally into a fruit salad: "*A journey of a thousand miles starts beneath one's feet*". Every journey, of every size, must start with that initial impetus, that drive to get on with it - to push through the lethargy and the fatigue. We have all experienced our own form of hardship in these last 12 months, it is now time to take that purposeful first step.

As if in response to that call, the cricket season is upon us. The first crack of leather on beautifully carved willow has rung out across Marsh Baldon Green: its echoing hum reaching the thirsting ears of the long-awaited patrons of the Seven Stars public house. For we are surfing the upward trajectory of renewed freedoms, seamlessly encapsulated by the perfectly headed pint, alongside the sporting efforts of our community's finest. We urge you to please come down and join us on the Green whenever there is a game on; you are most welcome. Perhaps this particular journey might be worth finding your feet for.

### Upcoming Fixtures

Sat 8th May	Oxford Brookes Invitational XI	home
Sun 23rd May	Gary Crook XI	home

### Cricket Nets

An opportunity for your first step on a journey to getting back into cricket or even taking it up for the first time can be found here! All are welcome at Cricket Nets held on Marsh Baldon Green every Thursday, 6.30pm through the cricket season (weather permitting).

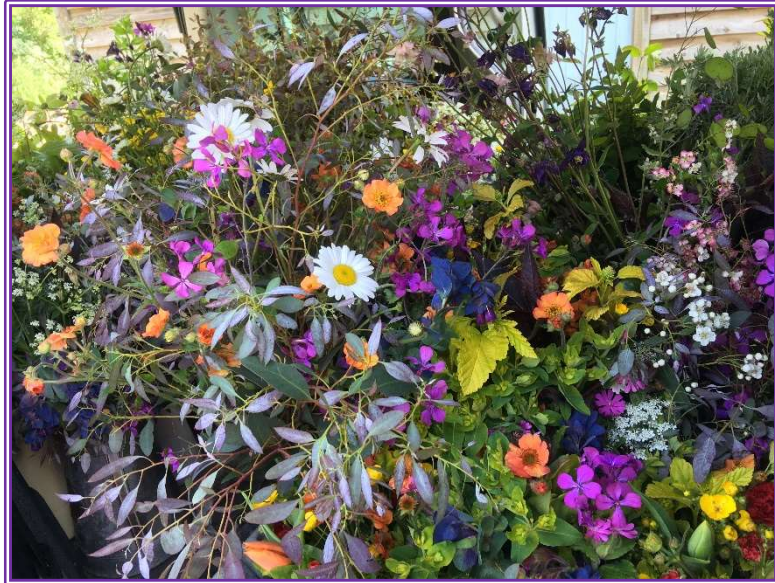
On this note, thank you so much to all who kindly donated towards the cost of the cricket nets. It's a wonderful opportunity to practice our skills and expose newer players to the joys of our brilliantly British sport.

Please do email us at [baldonscc@gmail.com](mailto:baldonscc@gmail.com) if you have any questions, would like to make a donation, or wish to be added to the mailing list for fixture / nets updates.

# Lizie's Country Bunches

My flowers are just beginning. Fresh, vibrant, colourful bunches are available from now until the end of the season.

Sweet peas will be ready soon, along with many other favourites.



From £5 (a handful) to £40 (an armful) and everything in between!  
Available at the garden gate, or I can safely deliver larger bunches.

Liziegiraudeau@gmail.com / 01865 343219 / 07590 580 631

29 Toot Baldon

## WHISPERING COTTAGES B&B, NUNEHAM COURTENAY

Dear Villagers

We are delighted to announce we will be able to reopen on 17th May 2021 and are very much looking forward to welcoming guests once more.

All villagers (Nuneham and the Baldons) receive a discount of 10% when booking 2 nights or more. For those that have not seen our new room The Baroque Suite.... this room lends itself perfectly as a Bridal Suite or for that Very Special occasion.

Please visit our website [www.whisperingcottages.co.uk](http://www.whisperingcottages.co.uk)

New for this year we are opening our garden to the public for Homemade Cream Teas served on vintage china.... Monday – Thursday 2.30pm-4.30pm. This will be weather dependant. Booking would be advised.

We will be following Government Guidelines on Health and Safety.

We hold a Food Hygiene rating of 5.

Hoping to welcome you soon.

Georgia and Paul

+44(0)1865 343531 / +44(0)7585 353513 text only please



# The Baldons Summer Ball

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August**

(Subject to government restrictions)

**Bring your own food & drink, & prepare to dance the night away to a live band in a marquee on the village green!**

**Decorate your table & dress to impress according to the theme which will be announced in due course.**

Tickets will be available to purchase on a first come first served basis, limited to residents of the Baldons & Nuneham Courtenay initially, before opening to friends of villagers if space allows.

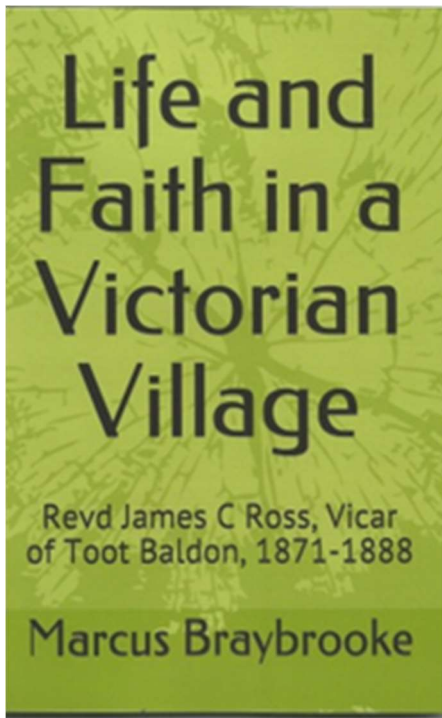
**Watch out for further details in the coming weeks!**

**We hope to see as many of you there as possible**





**A NEW BOOK BY MARCUS BRAYBROOKE**  
**“LIFE AND FAITH IN A VICTORIAN VILLAGE”**  
**REVD JAMES C. ROSS, VICAR OF TOOT BALDON 1871-1888**



When Marcus was priest-in-charge in the Baldons, he found, mouldering in a corner of the vestry of Toot Baldon Church, a book containing the detailed “Annual Charges” of a former Vicar, James Ross. From this Marcus has recreated a wonderful picture of village and church life.

While the book will be of particular interest to those who know Toot Baldon, the picture it paints gives a fascinating insight into the life of a country clergyman, within the historical context of the time. We learn about turmoil within the Church and also about wider social issues. Ross understood the importance of education for all. He paid particular attention to the Village School and also set up a Night School. Another initiative was to set up a Penny Bank to help improve the Villagers’ standard of living.

We are planning a Book Launch in Toot Baldon in June. Details of this event will be fully publicised once plans have been finalised.

The book will be available very shortly from Amazon, or from Marcus (marcusbraybrooke4@gmail.com). There will also be copies available in the Village, from Jenny van Dijk in Toot Baldon and Veronica Sandilands in Marsh Baldon (vsandilands@btinternet.com). The cost is £10, from which £1 will be given to the Church in the Baldons.

P.S. Afternoon Tea with Mary and Marcus Braybrooke – their biography written by granddaughter Helen Hobin is now available on Kindle.

**ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER**

Items for the June 2021 newsletter

**by 16<sup>th</sup> May please**

Any villager is welcome to send items for publication in the newsletter. Please send copy to Natasha Eliot: tashaandjames@btopenworld.com. Alternatively, I can be contacted on 343478 or at Baldon House East, Marsh Baldon.

For advertising queries, please contact Leanna Maggs on:  
leanna.maggs@gmail.com or on 01865 340 521

## **NUNEHAM COURTENAY PARISH COUNCIL NEWS**

### **Playing Field**

The Playing Field Association sent a statement to the Annual Parish Meeting saying it does not want anything more to do with the Parish Council and is going to develop the Playing Field on its own. You can read the full statement on the Parish Council's website here: <http://nunehamcourtenay.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/APM-2021-NCSPFA-statement.pdf>.

The Parish Council might dispute quite a few of the things the Playing Field Association has said but at least the way forward now seems clear. Instead of the two organisations blaming each other for lack of progress, the Association is just going to get on with developing the Playing Field.

Let us hope that means we can look forward to seeing the grass cut regularly this summer and the children of Nuneham Courtenay able to use the Playing Field to run around and play games, even if there is not any play equipment yet. Fundraising for play equipment is a big challenge and I'm sure everyone wishes the Association well as it begins trying to raise enough money.

### **Annual Parish Meeting**

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. I am not going to pretend that it attracted a crowd. You have already heard in previous articles about what the Council has been doing and there was not much news from the Village Hall Committee or the Lunch Club Committee either: the Village Hall is still subject to lots of Covid-19 restrictions and it's also too soon for the Lunch Club to restart. The meeting was only memorable for the statement from the Playing Field Association, which I've mentioned earlier.

### **A4074**

You may already have noticed that the A4074 was not shut on some nights between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> April to enable surface dressing to be carried out. The County Council changed the dates: the closures will now take place on some nights between 25<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> May.

### **Local elections, 6<sup>th</sup> May**

By the time you read this it will probably be too late to register to vote or to request a postal vote for the local elections: the deadlines were 19<sup>th</sup> April and 20<sup>th</sup> April respectively.

Here you will have a choice of three candidates on your ballot paper: Robin Bennett, Green; Crispin Flintoff, Labour; Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, Conservative. If you're voting in person, the polls open at 7am and close at 10pm.

### **Next Council meeting**

The next meeting of the Council is on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm. It is the Council's annual meeting at which it elects its chair for the coming year and deals with a lot of formal business, such as re-adopting key governance documents and policies.



I would not be honest if I said it is one of the most interesting meetings to sit through but if you have something you want to raise with the Council, you can just let the Chair know in advance and you can say what you want to say right at the start of the meeting and not have to sit through all the other stuff.

As things stand, this will be the last meeting the Council will be allowed to hold via Zoom under the Covid-19 legislation: after 7<sup>th</sup> May, meetings will have to be face to face, so the Council will revert to meeting in the Village Hall.

### **Vacancy**

There is a vacancy again on the Parish Council so, if you're interested, speak to one of the existing councillors (Madhvi Saini, John Peters, Mandy Rigault and Akshay Morye) or email me.

Nuneham Courtenay is only a small parish and the Parish Council does not own any land or buildings or provide any of the local services but it can represent the parish over issues like the gravel extraction threat and it can provide small things for the parish like the defibrillator and the litter bins.

So being a parish councillor can be a really useful role for the community.

## **SARAH WELLS** **Cordon Bleu Cooking**

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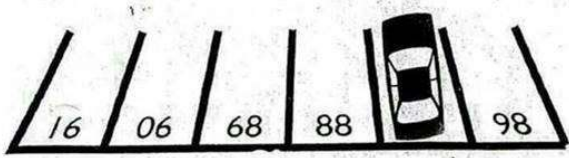
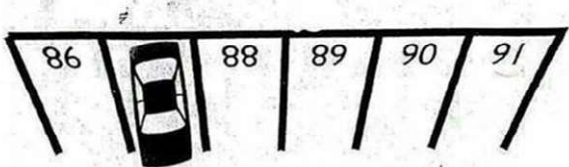
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**PUZZLE PAGE – JUST FOR FUN – WITH THE ANSWERS....**

<p>If...TOOT BALDON = 12, BERINSFIELD = 21, NUNEHAM COURTENAY = 36, MARSH BALDON = 18, ...what is THE SEVEN STARS = ?</p>	<p><b>33.</b> Add up the open ends on each letter (for example, T = 3 and so on)</p>
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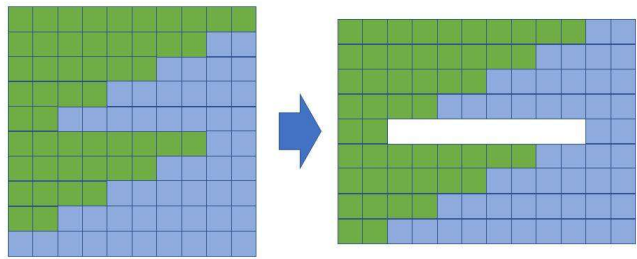
<p>A snail is climbing a wall 10m high. It climbs 3m up each day, then slips back 2m each night. How many days will it take to reach the top of the wall?</p>	<p><b>8 days.</b> It climbs 7m by the morning of day 7, so finishes the climb on day 8</p>
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<p>In South Oxfordshire, there were 55,000 votes cast and the winner got, respectively, 8,000, 4,000 and 3,000 more votes than the other three candidates. How many votes did the winner get?</p>	<p><b>17,500.</b> A bit of maths: <math>X + X - 3000 + X - 4000 + X - 8000 = 55,000</math>, so <math>4X = 70,000</math>, so <math>X = 17,500</math>.</p>
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<p>What is the number of the parking space that this car occupies?</p> 	<p><b>87.</b> Perhaps more obvious this way up</p> 
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<p>A young woman visited the Great Pyramids of Egypt in 1995. So moved by the trip, she vowed to return one day with her children to see these great wonders. She fulfilled her vow when, in 1969, she and her son visited the Great Pyramids. How is this possible?</p>	<p><b>1995 BC, returning in 1969 BC</b></p>
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<p>What has four letters, sometimes has nine letters and never has five letters?</p>	<p><b>'What' does indeed have four letters, 'sometimes' has nine letters and 'never' has five letters</b></p>
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<p>You have a 12ft x 9ft room with a central chimney breast (obviously not carpeted!). Your carpet fitter tells you that the carpet can be cut from a single <b>square</b> piece of carpet with just one cut to the carpet (which doesn't have to be a straight line). How can you do this?</p>	<p>Cut along the line between blue and green, shifting the blue portion two squares to the right and one square upwards.</p> 
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## TAKE THE RUBBISH HOME!

With the third UK Covid lockdown easing, during March 2021, we've seen hundreds of people gathering in parks and green spaces, desperate to get their long-missed fix of the great outdoors. Enjoying the sun on their backs, the breeze on their faces, and good company. Aided by outdoor food and drink. Good times! Well, for some.

After being hidden away in our homes, we've largely come to appreciate our gardens, and the wildlife therein. People are saying that the whole lockdown experience has made them seek out local green spaces, and enjoy them more too.

Then, why I have to ask, has so much litter been left by the crowds now visiting our parks and green areas? They wouldn't leave such vast amounts of rubbish in their own gardens, or on their doorsteps. Though, maybe, I'm wrong to assume they wouldn't?

Whether or not there are enough bins available for rubbish, is irrelevant. The discarded material was originally taken to the park etc, so it can easily be taken home again too. Its lighter, as most of the contents have been eaten, so what's the problem?

It's been said, its mainly young people, university age, who have gathered and have left the litter. The same young people who are shouting that their futures are being impacted by the ecological and climate crisis we face. I'm not going to say and make a blanket statement that it is the young who are littering. What I will say is, maybe the council shouldn't be so efficient in clearing up our mess, maybe leaving it for a few days, so when the litterers return (and they will) to enjoy the green space again, they will see and experience the true scale and impact that their littering has. Especially as they won't find anywhere to sit until the litter is cleared.

Most of us wouldn't litter in our own back yard, as it impacts our enjoyment, and many would be worried about the dangers and impacts on the wildlife nearby. So, maybe, we should all start seeing our shared parks, and green areas in the wider community, as our backyard too? Something we're all custodians of.

So, this year, instead of having positive impacts on your own garden, let's try and have positive impacts on our wider community too.

Happy Gardening  
Stuart Mabbutt  
Wildlife Gardening Specialist  
[www.wildmaninspires.co.uk](http://www.wildmaninspires.co.uk)  
01865 747243.

# **GREAT NEWS**

**BERINSFIELD LIBRARY IS NOW OPEN  
PLEASE NOTE THE SLIGHT CHANGE IN  
OPENING HOURS**

**Monday – closed  
Tuesday 2-5.00pm  
Wednesday 10-12.30 & 2-5.00pm  
Friday 10-12.30 & 2-5.00pm  
Saturday 10-12.30**

**Our community activities are all on hold  
for the moment but we will be back.**

**Pop in and see us.**

**We will meet and greet you, have a one-way system  
and books are quarantined for 72 hours  
All welcome**

**VISIT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY AND  
SEE WHAT WE HAVE ON OFFER**

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries)



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Unit 19 Wheatley Business Centre, Old London Road, Wheatley, Oxford, OX33 1XW

## CHURCH SERVICES FOR MAY

Our gradual return to church services continues, so here are the services for the month of May.

- 2nd May** Team Zoom Service from Culham (see Dorchester Abbey website for joining information)
- 9th May** 5pm Holy Communion St Peter's Marsh Baldon
- 16th May** Team Zoom Service from Warborough (see Dorchester Abbey website for joining information)
- 23rd May** 6pm BCP Evensong St Lawrence Toot Baldon
- 30th May** Team Zoom Service from Dorchester Abbey (see Dorchester Abbey website for joining information)

If you would like more information, or if you just want to chat, please give me a call (07823 809 112) or drop me an email: [revteresa@outlook.com](mailto:revteresa@outlook.com)



A free Church of England phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers.

Do share the number, 0800 804 8044, with those who may be feeling lonely and isolated.

Diocese of Oxford Church at home services are available to dial into too - find out more at [www.oxford.anglican.org/livestream](http://www.oxford.anglican.org/livestream)

## Christian Aid Week is 10 – 16 May 2021



Envelopes will be collected by local volunteers.

Climate chaos is one of the greatest injustices we face. Your gift could help a community build an earth dam, so when the rains do come, they will have the water they need to live.