

The Grapevine



By the time you read this we may have already enjoyed the Village Celebration for winning the Best Kept Small Village last year. Hope the sun shone and that everyone had a wonderful time. This is a very special village – of course, it's situated in a beautiful corner of Wiltshire but it's the people who make a place special and we are lucky enough to have such lovely people living in our village – people who are kind, thoughtful and always willing to help a neighbour in need. Sadly, we've recently lost two of those lovely people, Bunny Lees-Smith and Alfie Plumb, and our thoughts go out to their families. The flag in the village has been at half-mast which was a lovely touch – thank you to whoever thought to do that.

The wildflowers along the grassy verge by the Cloatley Road junction are just starting to bloom and bring a wonderful pop of colour to the village, and the many communal flower beds and boxes are looking wonderful – thanks to everyone who takes the time to maintain these areas – as we said, a special village full of very special people. Eds.



Deadline for news for the August Grapevine: July 10th 2025

The size and content of The Grapevine depends on the amount of copy we receive from individuals and groups, so please keep the news and events coming in!

All articles, adverts to be sent to: grapevinesn16@aol.com

Or to 21 Follyfield, Hankerton. SN16 9LA

The opinions expressed are the responsibility of the authors.

We reserve the right to edit material.

Nature Diary – June 2025.

At the time of writing (May 1st), we have been enjoying a prolonged spell of pleasant, warm and sunny weather. There has been little rain, much to the annoyance of the gardeners amongst us! It seems that it has become a feature of our weather in recent years, often getting “stuck” in one mode, whether dry or wet, cold or hot. This lack of variation can be problematical, not just for the gardener or farmer, but also for the wildlife. For instance, prolonged dry spells can make it very difficult for Blackbirds to find earthworms for their young in the nest.



The subject of this month's Diary is a case in point – the Small Tortoiseshell butterfly (*Aglais urticae*). In my butterfly reference, “The Butterflies of Britain and Ireland by Jeremy Thomas and Richard Lewington”, published in 1991, it begins its description of the Small Tortoiseshell by stating “*There are few more common butterflies than the Small Tortoiseshell in the British Isles*”. How times have changed!

Last year was disastrous for this species, and the published figures show that it has declined by 86% since the 1970's. No longer common, to the extent that some butterfly monitors state they are seeing just one or two in a season.

So, let's refresh our memories and consider the butterfly itself. It is a medium sized butterfly, predominantly red/orange on the upper wings with black and yellow patches and lines of blue markings along the wing edges. The underwings are mainly cream and brown that resemble the appearance of a dead leaf, which helps to keep the insect safe at rest with its wings closed.

The female lays her eggs in large batches on Stinging Nettles (*Urtica dioica*) requiring the nettles to be a large patch in good sunshine, and young and fresh. When they hatch, the caterpillars spin a web to house them all, when not consuming the nettles. As they grow, they spin new and larger web nests, until after their penultimate moult, they go their separate ways and live alone. There tend to be two broods of caterpillars in the summer. The caterpillars are mostly black in colour (but it varies) with bright colours in



bands and spots, that act as a warning to predators that they are toxic (after all, they have been feeding on nettles).

The adults feed on nectar, and we can all probably remember having watched them feeding on the flowers of buddleia, asters, sedums and valerian, especially in the



autumn prior to them seeking somewhere to hibernate over the winter. They will overwinter in sheds, garages and even indoors. The latter situation is not so good, because with central heating in our houses they warm up and become active. These individuals should be gently caught and put in a shed or garage, but not turfed outdoors because they will soon exhaust their fat reserves and die.

What are the reasons for this butterfly's decline? Well, there is no shortage of their larval foodplant, the Stinging Nettle, but the weather could be affecting its quality. The caterpillars need fresh, young nettles to feed on, and dry and hot early summers have an adverse effect on the nettles, making them drier and containing less nitrogen, which adversely affects growth of the caterpillars. Indeed, the female butterflies will actually lay less eggs if the quality of the foodplant has been compromised. I expect that we have all seen stunted, pale coloured or tough nettles on our walks, affected by the previous weather – not good for the larvae.

Weather can also affect the species if it is very wet, as constant rain reduces the chances of male and female butterflies finding each other to breed, as they hunker down rather than fly around. This can be devastating for a species that has a short period of being "on the wing". Obviously, insecticides can kill butterflies as well as the targeted species of pest, but research done suggests that levels of insecticides found in Small Tortoiseshells is well below the level of killing them (but that doesn't rule out having some other deleterious effect other than death).

Let us hope that we get varying weather this summer, with reasonable rainfall to keep the gardeners happy and the nettles green and fresh, and that the decline of this beautiful butterfly can begin to be reversed.

Steve Davies.



Thursday 19 June, 7.30pm
Charlton Village Hall

Swing from Paris: Parisian-flavoured jazz and Gypsy Swing
Tickets £16 in advance at swingfromparis.co.uk

★ ★ ★ ★ "intelligent, interesting and inventive" – The Jazz Mann

Swing from Paris are an all-string jazz quartet of violin, guitars and double bass, inspired by the music of the 1930s, '40s and '50s. Expect stylish jazz and vintage Parisian swing: from Benny Goodman, Charlie Christian, and Artie Shaw to Django Reinhardt, Stéphane Grappelli and the master of tango Astor Piazzolla.



MUSEUM EVENTS for JUNE & JULY

Further details & tickets available for all Events NOW

online & in Museum

<https://www.athelstanmuseum.org.uk/events/>

Wednesday 11 June - Sue Poolman

Rausing Building 7.30pm

The Story of Avon House:

A reflection of life in Malmesbury

Wednesday 18 June - Alexia Clark - Tea & Cake Talk

Rausing Building 2.30pm

The Work of the MOD War Detectives

Saturday 28 June - History Club - Elmer Flying Monk

Activity Club for 6-10 yrs + adult

Rausing Building 10.30-12.30

Wednesday 16 July - Mike Howarth - Tea & Cake Talk

The Revival of the Cotswold Canals

Please come & Support us!



Working Together for Our Communities

Roz Savage

Following the recent local elections, I'd like to extend my warmest congratulations to newly re-elected councillor, Elizabeth Threlfall, who will be representing Hankerton on Wiltshire Council. Whether you're seeing a familiar face or welcoming someone new, local councillors play a vital role in shaping the places we call home.

From planning decisions and local transport to social care and protecting our green spaces, councillors are at the heart of so much that affects our daily lives. They're often the first port of call when something isn't working - and the people helping to get things sorted. I've seen first-hand just how hard our councillors work to support their communities, and I want to thank everyone who puts themselves forward to serve in this way.

As your MP for South Cotswolds, I believe strongly in the power of collaboration. The best outcomes result when local councillors, residents, and MPs work side by side - sharing ideas, raising concerns, and pulling in the same direction. Whether it's improving bus services, making our streets safer, supporting local businesses or tackling flooding, we get the best results when we bring together different perspectives and local knowledge.

Collaboration isn't just a nice idea - it's essential. We face big challenges as a region, from the cost of living crisis and the pressures on rural services, to the urgent need for climate action and nature recovery. But we also have so many opportunities: incredible community spirit, innovative local businesses, and people who care deeply about where they live. By working together, we can help unlock that potential and build a brighter future for everyone across the South Cotswolds.

As always, I'll continue doing everything I can in Parliament to raise local concerns and push for the resources and attention our area deserves. But the most important part of my work happens locally - in conversations at village halls, in email exchanges with residents, and in meetings with councillors and community groups.

To those who've just been elected: no matter which party you represent, I look forward to working with you for the good of our communities. And to local residents: if there's something you think I or your councillor should know about, please don't hesitate to get in touch at [**roz.savage.mp@parliament.uk**](mailto:roz.savage.mp@parliament.uk). Together, we can work together to build strong, resilient and prosperous communities across the South Cotswolds.



Athelstan Pilgrim Way Cycling Route

In addition to the Athelstan Pilgrim Way walking routes, we have now designed a cycle route of around 100 miles, which covers all of the 36 churches in the North Wiltshire Deanery. The route consists of two circular sections, which can be ridden separately or combined into a single route. We have a draft version, but it now needs to be 'road tested'. We are looking for volunteers to try out either the whole route, one of the two sections, or even just a short section between two churches.

As the routes are circular, they can be started and ended at any church along the Athelstan Pilgrim Way.

We would like the route to be available for the 'Ride and Stride' day in September, so we need to have it finalised by the beginning of June. If you can help us, please contact David Pope at davidanne.pope@gmail.com. Thank you!

Reduce/Reuse/Recycle

Mrb Heating Ltd are running out of old used towels/flannels. If you have any that are too old to use or no longer needed please may we have them and reuse them. It helps keep our work neat and clean when they are working in small areas in various properties. I am more than happy to collect.

Thank you very much.

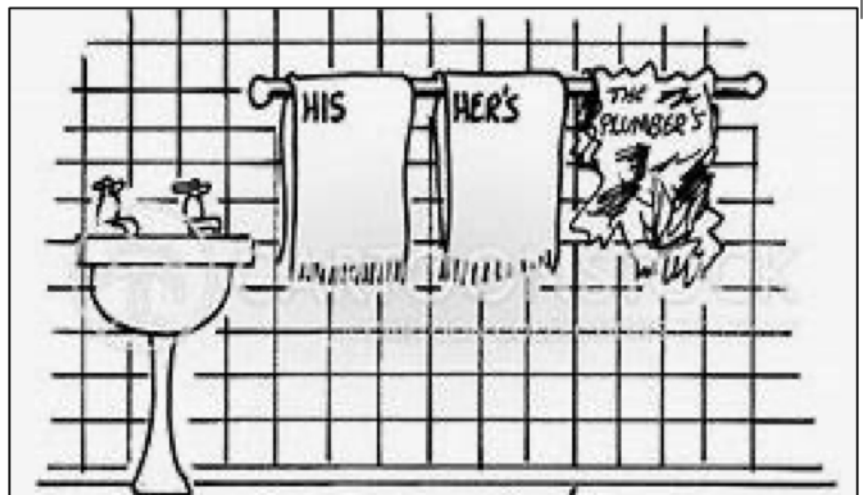
Many Thanks,

Kate

Director of MRB Heating LTD

07377 156524

katenurden75@gmail.com



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Email tobygregory@aol.com

Available:

Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays:

12.00pm to 1.30pm and 5.30pm until 7.00pm

Sunday (roasts only) £13.00: 12.30pm to 1.00pm

Order early to avoid disappointment!

Menu choices:

Teriyaki chicken with rice or chips (£14.95)

Moroccan vegetable Tagine with rice (£13.95)

Crispy breaded scampi with chips or salad (£14.25)

6oz Cheeseburger and bacon with chips (£12)

Cajun Chicken Caesar salad (£13.75)

Beer battered cod and chips (£14.95)

Chicken Madras Curry with rice and naan bread (£14.25)

Beef lasagna or vegetable Lasagna with chips (£14.75)

Spicy Vegetable burger, salsa and chunky chips (£13)

Pan fried Lambs Liver with mash and onion gravy (£14)

Desserts (*to be heated at home)

All £4.00

Sticky Toffee Pudding with custard*

Bread and Butter Pudding with custard*

Butterscotch ice-cream sundae

Cash or card payments

Local Deliveries by arrangement

See www.wheatsheafcrudwell.co.uk for updates



Malmesbury History Society

Malmesbury History Society is celebrating its 10th birthday this year, an important historical milestone if ever there was one!

The Group was set up “to advance education in the history of Malmesbury **and** its surrounding area and to promote and disseminate the history of the local area to the wider public of all ages.”

We now have over 90 members who are passionate and curious about the rich and fascinating history of our area.

The Society holds bi-monthly meetings where our members can listen to, or even present if they wish, on a subject related to Malmesbury’s history. We also have guest speakers. Our most recent meeting, for example, saw local historian Lucy Whitfield talk about two local women, drawn from research for her recent book *Extraordinary Ordinary Women of North Wiltshire*. Our range of talks has gone from the hoard of 1266 Roman coins discovered in Milbourne in 2012, through to Stop Line Green, Bristol’s 91-mile outer defensive system that was constructed after Dunkirk in 1940 and which covered our area.

One of the great benefits of having a membership society is that we are able to fund the printing of books on the history of Malmesbury which often start out as a talk at one of our meetings. We work closely with other local heritage groups and have recently supported both the Thomas Hobbes festival and the Athelstan 1100 event. We are also part of the Wiltshire Local History Network and the British Association of Local History.

New members are always made welcome, so why not join us at our next meeting.

Coming up...

Wednesday 23 July – The Rausing Building Malmesbury 7.30pm

10-year anniversary. A short review of activities over our first 10 years followed by a talk by Tony McAleavy on the Anglo Saxon Charters of Malmesbury Abbey.

**Wednesday 17th September – The Rausing Building Malmesbury
7.30pm**

Anne Goodyer - Malmesbury's debt to architect and archaeologist Sir Harold Brakspear

All details of our upcoming talks, meetings and events are on our website alongside summaries of recent talks, and links to help with your own research.

malmesburyhistorysociety.org.uk

or contact us at malmesburyhistorysociety@gmail.com

Rob Miller (Chair)



Image - 1598 monument to Sir Henry Knyvett and his wife, Charlton Church. Copyright Christina Staff

Alfie Plumb



We were saddened to hear about the recent passing of long-term Hankerton resident Alfie Plumb, beloved husband, father and grandfather. Alfie was born in Walthamstow, London, but moved to Swindon when he was 10 years old. He married Lynn in December 1969 and in 1974 they bought a plot of land together in Hankerton where they began building their own house. They finally moved in during April 1976 and then went on to raise their two children, Ritchie and Kerry. Alfie was very keen on local history and mechanics and could turn his hand to mending and making virtually anything! He loved a nice slice of home-made cake and until recently could always be found at the Saturday coffee mornings! We send our condolences to the family - he will be greatly missed by his neighbours and friends.



IN CHARGE

We ask for Your forgiveness, Lord, for thinking we're all right -
When deep within, we know that our pride is such a blight
How can we be so foolish, so blind as not to see - That we must
place our hope in You, wait in humility - For You are our Master
and our Lord. – Our hope is in You, Your Son, Your Word.

For when we're feeling right as rain – Not in distress, no hurt, no
pain

We feel that we're in charge and really, we can cope – We have
no need of You, Lord, until there is no hope

How arrogant a feeling – That sets our senses reeling

To not have You within our lives would really break our hearts –
We'd feel so lost, so desolate, dispirited, downcast

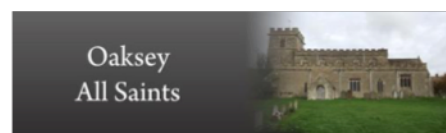
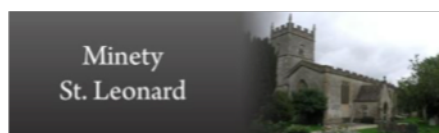
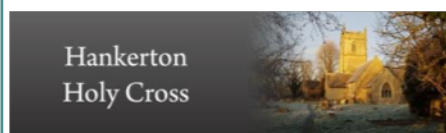
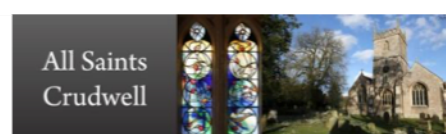
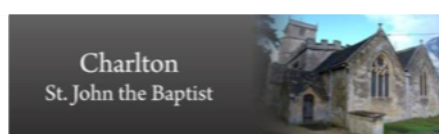
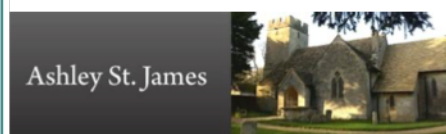
We need to know that You're in charge even though our faults
still flow – The same old sins keep happening which provide a
bitter blow

To the growth and bloom of stature that is needed by our souls –
Throughout our lives we need You to keep us whole

We fix our eyes on You, Lord, and try to seek Your Face. We
close our eyes before You, Lord, and wait to sense Your Grace.
We're glad that You're in charge, Lord, and we ask Your pardon
too – For the times when we don't recognise that all things come
from You.

Services across the Braydon Brook Benefice

All are welcome to attend any of the services taking place across the Benefice



| Date | Services in Church | Services on Zoom |
|---|---|------------------|
| Sunday 1st June | 9.30am, Holy Communion @ Hankerton | |
| | 10am, Friends & Family @ Crudwell | |
| | 11am, Holy Communion @ Oaksey | |
| | 6pm, Evening Prayer @ Ashley | |
| Sunday 8th June Pentecost | 10am, Benefice Holy Communion @ Crudwell | |
| Sunday 15th June Trinity Sunday | 8.30am, BCP Holy Communion @ Ashley | |
| | 9.30 am, Holy Communion @ Charlton | |
| | 9.30, Morning Praise @ Crudwell | |
| | 11am, Holy Communion @ Minety | |
| | 11am, Matins @ Oaksey | |
| | 4.30pm, Prayer, Praise & Story @ Hankerton | |
| Sunday 22nd June | 9.30am, Holy Communion @ Ashley | |
| | 9.30am, Morning Praise @ Charlton | |
| | 11am, Holy Communion @ Crudwell | |
| | 11am, Morning Praise @ Minety | |
| | 10.15am Sunday School and 11am, Family Service @ Oaksey | |
| Sunday 29th June | 10am, Benefice Holy Communion @ Oaksey | |

Mid-Week Services and Events

| | | | |
|------------------|--|-----------------------|---|
| Monday | Every other week | 10am | Bible Study via Zoom |
| Tuesday | Weekly | 9.00am | Morning Prayer via Zoom |
| Wednesday | 11th June (2nd Wed) | 10.30am | Coffee & Chat @ Crudwell |
| | Weekly | 7.30pm | Men's Bible Study 1 Days Court, Crudwell |
| Thursday | 12th June (2nd Thu) | 9.45am | BCP Communion Service @ Minety |
| Friday | Weekly | 9.00am | Morning Prayer via Zoom |
| Saturday | 7th June (1st Sat) | 11am – 12.30pm | Café Church @ Hankerton |

Please visit our website www.braydonbrook.co.uk and **Braydon Brook Churches Facebook Page** to find out more.

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| | 11am, Holy Communion @ Oaksey | |
| | 6pm, Evening Prayer @ Ashley | |
| Sunday 13th July | 9.30 am , Holy Communion @ Charlton | |
| | 11am, Holy Communion @ Minety | |
| | 11am, Matins @ Oaksey | |
| Sunday 20th July | 8.30am, Benefice Communion @ Hankerton | |
| Sunday 27th July | 9.30am, Holy Communion @ Ashley | |
| | 9.30am, Morning Praise @ Charlton | |
| | 11am, Holy Communion @ Crudwell | |
| | 11am, Morning Praise @ Minety | |
| | 10.15am Sunday School and 11am, Family Service @ Oaksey | |
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Please visit our website www.braydonbrook.co.uk and Braydon Brook Churches Facebook Page to find out more.



Malmesbury Garden Centre is a locally run business supplying all your garden requirements. We are still open and have some gorgeous flowers and vegetable plants in, lots of seeds and gardening tools. The staff are very friendly and willing to help you with all your needs. The Cafe food is scrumptious too!

We are open:

Monday to Saturday: 9:00am – 5:00pm

Sunday: 10.00am – 4.00pm



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Mbplumbing983@gmail.com

Patient Participation Group Update – June 2025

Patient Survey

MPCC conducted a patient satisfaction survey which was sent by text to 2100 patients, including friends and families. Feedback was consistent, and 93% said the service was good or very good. The results have been shared on social media and notice boards etc. MPCC are working through the 844 individual textual comments provided on the following subjects:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Access - Telephone | 214 |
| Considerations / Complaints | 15 |
| Premises /Car park | 4 |
| General Comments | 21 |
| Positive Feedback | 429 |
| Patches / Online | 68 |
| Prescribing | 11 |
| Uncategorised | 82 |

Patches

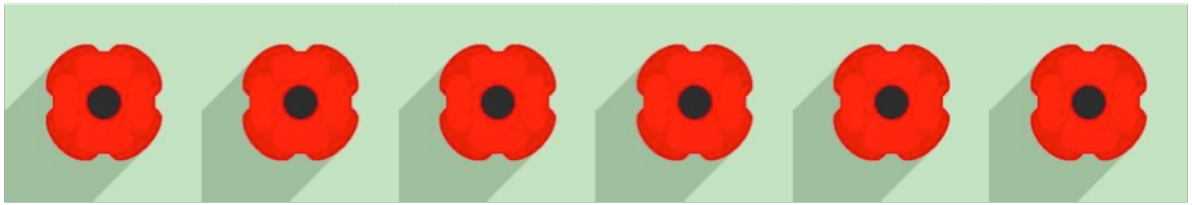
It was hoped to extend the hours for the service but it has been decided to delay this after taking into account the feedback from the patient survey.

Appointments

As continuity of care is a priority, telephone appointments for the same day are for urgent matters only. The aim is to offer all other appointments within 2 weeks.

If you have any comments that you would like to make about the services at MPCC please do not hesitate to let me know and I'll be very happy to take this forward. My contact number is 07856202115. The next Patient Participation Group meeting is on 3 June 2025. Provisional dates for meetings in 2025 are: 7th August, 7th October and 2nd December.

Shayne Smith



All Saints Church, Oaksey



**We need all the fabulous knitters of Oaksey & the
Braydon Brook Group of Churches to knit 1,000
Poppies!! It's a big ask, but we can do it.**

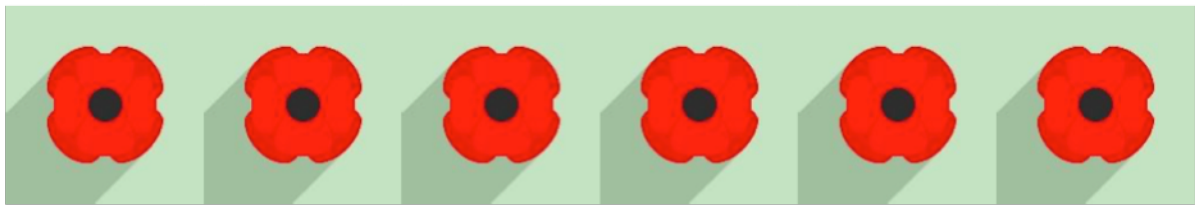
2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe, so, how many poppies can you make between now and the end of September? To bring the community together, Oaksey Church, with your help, is planning to create a large poppy display on the front of the Church altar for the Remembrance Day service on Sunday, 9th November.

The knitting pattern is on the back of this leaflet. Please drop off your poppies in the Shop or Church in Oaksey. If you have any spare wool, please pop it into one of the boxes.

For more information, please contact Jackie Falkingham on 01666 577956 or 07715 435583. Email: jhg2@btinternet.com

The poppies will be on display in future years, so you'll be making a little bit of Oaksey history.

**** Red poppies only please ****



Poppy Knitting Pattern

Gathered Poppy

Using double knit yarn & 4mm needles, cast on 60 stitches.

Knit 10 rows in garter stitch.

11th row: Knit 2 together all across row (30 stitches).

12th row: Slip 1 stitch, knit 2 together, then pass slip stitch over (psso).
Repeat this across the row (10 stitches).

Cut the yarn leaving a long tail and with a big-eyed needle, thread the yarn through the remaining 10 stitches and pull the poppy together.

Sew the side seam, then sew a black middle, or sew on a black button, or, with black wool, cast on 16 stitches, then cast them off. Roll the piece around and sew in the middle of the poppy.

For a smaller poppy, you can cast on 48 stitches and then after row 11, you'll have 24 stitches and after row 12, there'll be 8 stitches.



Mark Searley - Mybodytrainer



Did you know that we have a yoga class here at the church every Thursday? Places are limited but there are a couple of vacancies at the moment. Suitable for all ages and fitness levels. Contact Mark to book.

mybodytrainer@hotmail.com

www.mybodytrainer.co.uk

Tel: 07885 609885

Bunny Lees-Smith - the oldest resident on Follyfield

We are sad to report that Bunny Lees- Smith has died. He and his family were the first residents on Follyfield and became great supporters and organisers of village events. He was a gentleman who could be relied upon to help anyone and was a great source of anecdotes and knowledge about village life. He will be missed by his family and many friends.

There will be a full obituary in the next Grapevine.



Message from the Ministry

I want to talk about grief. Most of us have experienced it, and the older we get, the more likely it becomes that we will lose someone close to us. But we rarely talk about it, and we often set mental time limits on how we should feel. Whether it's a sudden, unexpected loss, the slow and painful slide of illness, or simply the gentle end of a long life well lived, the effect on those left behind can be devastating and long reaching.

I spoke to my father this week who confessed that he was struggling with this lovely weather. So many beautiful places to go, so many things to do... the enjoyment of each and every one diminished by no longer having my mother to share them with, so he did nothing. The loneliness of loss can sometimes be debilitating. She's been gone nearly 7 years now, but when I was bored on a long drive this week, I still found myself thinking 'I'll just call mum for a chat' and feeling that familiar stabbing pain of knowing she was gone.

Through my work at church, I frequently encounter death - talking to those who's loved ones have passed away, being involved in funerals, the complicated and sometimes agonising work of making decisions about the graveyard and how it's used by our community, or taking part in worship that reminds us of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Knowing that my mother is safe in the arms of a heavenly father who knew every fibre of her being because he created her, knowing that she's gone home, doesn't make me miss her any less, just as knowing Jesus rose again on Easter day doesn't take away the pain and loss of Good Friday. But what does help me is being able to turn to that same heavenly father, who knows first hand the pain of death and loss, for solace in that grief. What does help is the joy of precious memories. What does help is the love and support of family and friends. What does help is talking – allowing those emotions to be recognised and acknowledged, sharing those beautiful memories, sometimes admitting that things weren't ok and mistakes were made that can now never be undone. But not everyone has someone to talk to, and sometimes it can be hard to share with others who are also grieving themselves. Church isn't full of perfect people – I'm sure they won't mind me telling you that – but what I can say without doubt is our local churches are full of people who are kind, caring and willing listeners. We may not be able to work miracles (we leave that to the boss!) but if you need someone to talk to, about grief or any other subject, we are always here for you. The church doesn't just belong to the people who walk through the door on Sunday morning – it belongs to everyone in the community, and you're all welcome. We'd love to see you, and I'm sure we'd find something to talk about...

Rachel Swatton



Pizza Night!

After a successful couple of visits from Andrea at Pizzeria Italiana 2000, there is a plan to hold a Pizza night in the village. We are obviously a pizza loving village and love to get into the Italian spirit!

Pizza night at the church coming soon. Date tbc.





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Malmesbury

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