

newt

Staying in to keep us all safe
online issue 3



The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me by the still waters,
He restores my soul: he leads me in the paths
of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear
no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me.
You prepare a table for me **in the presence of my enemies:**
You anoint my head with oil; **my cup overflows.**
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 23



Taking a Break

APRIL 2020

St John & St Stephen's, Newtown Community Magazine

stjohnandststephen.org.uk



Welcome to online NEWT 3

When the COVID 19 lockdown started, Archbishop Justin and Pope Francis both suggested we stop at coffee time each day to use familiar words - the 23rd Psalm and the Lords' Prayer.

Five weeks in, we probably need our breaks even more ...



Positivity and joy - See page 3

[Click here](#)
to watch
nature live
on
webcams



Hello

*I'm so grateful
for the
weather*

says Claire Alcock

I can't imagine going through lockdown in cold, wintry or miserable weather. For anyone who's started the day feeling low, and has then looked out of the window at the blue sky, listened to the birds or, even better (if possible) felt the warm sun on their skin, nature is very healing.

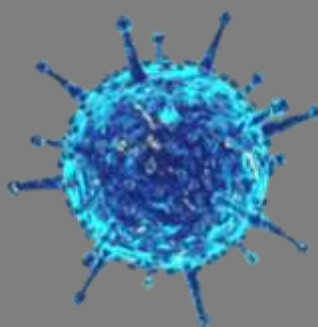
I try and end the afternoon sitting on a bench outside my kitchen, with a cup of tea, feeling the ground beneath my feet and literally 'grounding' myself. That's when I find I can pray most easily.

For many who follow a faith, our sense of being connected to creation ties with a belief in a Creator who made us and made our planet; it stands to reason that when we are in touch with nature we feel in some way connected. We are part of the same system.

When we finally emerge from this current situation, I hope we can think much more deeply about how we care for the planet. By changing our own lifestyles away from immediate gratification and consumerism, to living more lightly and valuing the cleaner air and space for wildlife, that could be a lasting positive legacy of lockdown. Then perhaps we can feel even more connected with the earth we all share, the place that nurtures our daily life.

Stay safe! Blessings, Claire

FROM lockdown WEEK 5



*So grateful
for all the
right PPE*

**says Priya
Herath**

"I'm so proud of my care home manager for getting prepared with all the PPE we need," said Priya, as our local care homes faced their first cases.



An online chance to pray **ALL DAY**

**Join a virtual pilgrimage of prayer on
Saturday 16 May between 10 and 4.**

All are welcome to join this online event, which builds on prayer days we held in church last year and the the year before.

Enjoy one or more of the following - prayer at the start or end of the day, interactive talks on different topics, and a one to one conversation with an external prayer guide or our vicar, Rev Claire. For more details or to request a one to one please contact Rev Christine on bainbridgerev@gmail.com

Church Contacts



Vicar
**Rev Claire
Alcock**



Assoc. Priest
**Christine
Bainbridge**



Parish Centre
Manager
Tanya Penn



Churchwardens
**Rosie Croft &
Ian Maynard**

POSITIVITY AND JOY AT New Town Primary School

New Town pupils have been trying to cheer up the local area by posting rainbows and pictures in their windows, with some lovely messages of solidarity. At school, children clubbed together to make a big, beautiful community display. Thank you to everyone who shared their positivity and joy with the school family! Keep sharing your work, projects and creativity on the school Facebook page: New Town Primary School Reading



A Nature Poem

The silky green leaves
floating with the breeze,
busy bees dancing in the air
and I can see them on my cheerful
chair.

Squeaky scowling squirrels
gobbling nutritious nuts,
good for them, they're in luck.

As white as snow in a row, the
waves and sea is crystal clear,
their chit-chatting I can hear.

The birds are tweeting
the sun is greeting.

*By Japkiran,
New Town Primary School*

We're following our orders and as
quiet as a mouse,

we are saving our lives by staying
in our house.

Thank you nurses, thank you
doctors,

thank you NHS, you're all
protectors.



School Contacts



Head teacher
**Polly
Cornish**



Deputy
Head
**Penny
Cornish**

New Town School 0118 937 5509
email: admin@newtown.reading.sch.uk



Head teacher
**Martina
Parsons**



Deputy
Head
**Kim
Blythe**

St John's School 0118 937 5540
email: admin@stjohns.reading.sch.uk

Unexpected
spare time
on your own
or with kids?



Let's **GET CREATIVE** to say 'FAREWELL TO THE GAS TOWER'

Before the coronavirus lockdown disrupted everything that we thought possible in 2020, we planned a series of events and exhibitions to celebrate the gas tower and its place in our community. The first of these was a community art exhibition, to be held at St John's Church. Other events would be organised by Jelly, Nature Nurture, Reading Refugee Support Group, Reading Urban Sketchers and Salvo Toscano Photography, with the series culminating in an exhibition at the Turbine House, "The Last Gas Tower - Reading's Changing Skyline".

Although it's currently impossible to set firm dates for any of these events, we continue to make plans because we see the coronavirus lockdown as an opportunity for creativity. The windows of Newtown are already full of rainbows, and many of us, who in "normal life" have very little time for art, are finding new outlets for our creativity. We are using this issue of Newt to give you a taster of the contributions we've already received and **we invite your contributions!**

Do you have a memory you'd like to share, or a story to tell? Would you like to show your artwork? All ages and abilities welcome. You will retain copyright and be responsible for your art.

We invite:

drawings

paintings

digital art

photography

mixed media

sculpture

collage

poetry

stories and memories

other?

GAS TOWER
COMMUNITY ART
EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

"When Reading's last Gas Tower is removed we shall be saying farewell to a familiar Reading landmark whose presence has played a part in many personal memories, including my own. When permission was granted for its demolition, it seemed the right thing to do to gather communities together for a celebration before we say goodbye. The structure will disappear, but the Tower will leave a lasting heritage through art and new connections, in the spirit of Reading's vibrant creative energy".

Fiona Talkington Presenter - BBC Radio 3

First get creating!

Then, to book a space in this exhibition for your gas tower artwork, please complete our registration form.

The link to the form is on our Facebook page, if you need a paper copy please ask Mary Chambers: text 07906 807511 or email mary.katalun@gmail.com.

Please also contact Mary or Leslee Barron (leslee.barron@gmx.com) if you have any questions or would like to discuss your contribution.

Facebook: [@newtowngastower](https://www.facebook.com/newtowngastower)

Twitter: [@towergas](https://twitter.com/towergas)

Exhibition PREVIEW

"I never saw an ugly thing in my life! For let the form of an object be what it may - light, shade and perspective will always make it beautiful." John Constable.



Reading Gas Works & Holder by Michael John Quinn, c.1955

"I hope that I have kept to Constable's requirements for beauty. I would often visit my Granny, Ethel Mary, in Cumberland Road, always to be given a boiled egg, which oddly smelled very like the leaking gas! All of this, and much more, is buried in my painting."

Digital painting by Leslee Barron (2019), from Cumberland Road

"The monochrome image below was from a photograph taken during a stroll along the river Thames. The moody clouds layered thick in the sky."



*"Look Mummy, I've found the gas tower in a puddle!"
by Mary and Alina Chambers, from School Terrace*



"Photography is my passion. I was inspired to take the pictures because I knew the gas tower wouldn't be there forever. For something a bit different, I added my own twist which as abstract seems to work."

by Tina Panting, from Earley

Don't forget, it's *your* contributions we want - amateur or professional, adult or childrens' work - just inspired by the Gas Tower...

