

Benefice of Christ Church and St Mary's, Frome

Diocese of Bath and Wells



News and Views
February / March / April

£1

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Letter from Bishop Michael

Hope in deed

I 'd love to be writing a sunny New Year's article reflecting a boundless global optimism about the future. Yet the reality is very different. War in Ukraine drags on and tensions in the Middle East remain dangerous. The cost-of-living crisis continues and many are finding things tough. Pessimism rather than optimism is the order of our day. In such circumstances, where can hope be found? For Christians, confidence and assurance rest in the promise of the future that God has in store for us. In the Bible God says: 'See, I am making all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end' (Revelation 21: 5-6). Christian hope is that whatever may be happening to us now, God has a very different and favourable future in store for us. Critically, the point of such hope is not just to enable us to say 'Well don't worry about present circumstances. It's all going to be all right eventually.' Hope's purpose is to shape how we live and what we do now. It's to enable us to live out the words of the old Christian Aid poster that said, 'We believe in life before death'.

Towards the end of last year, I had the privilege of visiting a number of the deaneries of our diocese. On those visits I heard at first-hand how through the work of our parishes, schools and chaplaincies, Christian hope translates into practical action for good amongst the everyday lives of local communities. We are offering debt counselling and food banks, support for families and care of the lonely and isolated. All these and many more were amazing examples of how we can join with God to 'make all things new' right here, right now. So as we start a new year, please can I encourage us all not to stare into our glasses, lamenting their being half full? Rather, through how we live and what we do, let us fill them with the new wine of God's kingdom – overflowing to the brim. For that is hope in deed.

Bishop Michael



Pastoral Letter

It seems such a long time ago since I wrote the last letter for the magazine – Christmas has been and gone and a New Year has begun.

By the time you read this, it will be February and signs of Spring will definitely be around us. But, as I write it still feels like the year is young and full of possibility. There is still time to improve on what has gone before and to make lasting changes. Certainly, as we look around us, the cost of living crisis, healthcare crisis, wars, poverty and an ever hotter planet, we need to change. But what can we do? What difference does our individual effort make to these enormous and complex problems?

At the beginning of a new year there are lots of opportunities to make changes. It seems that everywhere we look...TV programmes, newspaper articles, social media there is the invitation to make 2024 the year that counts... New year, New Me .. to improve ourselves, our circumstances, our finances, our prospects... add your own area for improvement. Articles about self help strategies and life hacks abound suggesting that if only we try hard enough and follow the right advice, everything will come up smelling of roses. Yet, we know that this often isn't the case. Sometimes, no matter what we do, however hard we try, things just don't work out... and on a global scale, it seems that nothing we do will have any effect at all. Maybe, rather than self help, which by definition is pretty limited, we should be thinking about God's help which is infinite and eternal.

Luckily, Easter is early this year which means that Lent starts on February 14th . Lent is a time set aside to prepare for Easter and *as Christians we are called to journey into the desert of repentance that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline we may grow in grace and learn to be your people once again. Through fasting, prayer and acts of service you bring us back to your generous heart. Through study of your holy word you open our eyes to your presence in the world and free our hands to welcome others into the radiant splendour of your love.*

(words from the Eucharistic prayer for Lent)

- Repentance is about recognising that we are heading in the wrong direction, stopping and choosing a different path... not just any different path, but the Way that Jesus has shown us.
- Fasting and acts of service is about remembering our dependence on God's goodness by letting go of something that we take for granted. It might be food, energy, our car, technology....
- Studying is about setting aside time to think, to explore and discuss. Reading might not be easy, but sharing ideas, learning from each other and encouraging each other is important,
- Freeing us to welcome others suggests that Lent should be a joyful time. We journey through this particular wilderness with joy and hope knowing that this journey, which may indeed be difficult, will bring us closer to God our Father.

So two invitations for Lent..

1) come and join a Lent group

2) try to get to church every Sunday during Lent even if the service is in the 'other' church

And ask God to help you and rely on his generous and abundant grace, mercy and power to change your lives and the life of our world.

Springtime Blessings

Revd Liz

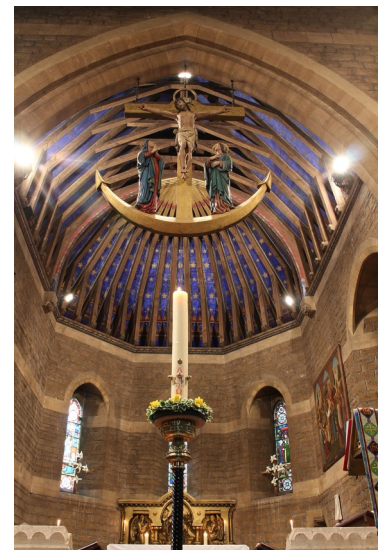
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## **The Anchor at St Mary's**

There is a large anchor that hangs from the roof inside the church above the chancel arch.

Here is its story:

It was placed there by Reverend T. Warrilow. The base of the anchor is said to contain soil from the Holy Land.



It is understood that Rev'd Warrilow came from the fishing port of Hull and so an appropriate connection with the anchor symbol is likely.

However, the "ancient " connection is more likely to be associated with the founding of St Mary's Church in 1863 as the daughter church of St John's.

St John's connection with Bishop Ken partly lies in the fact that he was buried in the graveyard of St John's. Bishop Ken (1637-1711) was bequeathed a ring showing Christ crucified upon an anchor. The ring was bequeathed to him by Izzak Walton, the famous 17th C fisherman and author. The anchor has subsequently become a kind of symbol of St Mary's.

For the curious, Bishop Ken's gold bishop's cross, with the emblem of Christ crucified on an anchor, can be seen set into the larger cross on St John's altar .



## Mary's House

This coming year sees plans for the Mary's House Community gather pace. Work has begun on the renovations to the inside of the house. Last year we began to dream about how we might be able to use the house and the land (garden and paddock) to create a space that would offer something radically different to the town, the diocese, the world (!)

Hospitably and community were two themes that kept emerging, and a vision has grown and been shared of establishing a residential adult community in the house and to use the gardens to offer hospitality to individuals and groups locally and from further afield. Already we have had offers from people willing to lead retreat and quiet days.

The Diocese have been incredibly supportive and generous and they have given us the go ahead to establish this community who will live and pray together following a simple rule of life and a shared pattern of prayer whilst working out in the 'real world'.

Our first priority is to create place and space for prayer, giving thanks for all that has already been, finding encouragement and delight in that which already is and to discern God's voice calling us forwards to what is yet to be.

Our hope is to restore the ramshackle building at the top of the drive next to the garage to be a prayer cell that is open to anyone to use. Prayer is at the heart of this whole adventure.

Without God's help, we can do nothing and with God's help, nothing is impossible. We are really blessed that the house is physically connected to the church and that there is already a worshipping community that gathers week by week to pray. We have written a prayer for Mary's House and even now, as we are praying for those who God is prompting to explore a calling to lie in community, please will you take this prayer into your own patterns and pray it regularly. As time goes by there will be more opportunities to gather and pray.

We have also set up a website <http://maryshouse.org> which will (soon) provide information

Triune God,  
whose very nature is community,  
may Mary's House be prayerful  
in work and rest.

May the community life  
be vibrant and generous,  
serving and creative,  
restful and inspiring,  
humble and courageous,  
and may it be marked  
by the love and grace of Jesus,  
who himself shared  
an earthly home in Nazareth  
and in whose name we pray.

Amen



# Jane's Family Recipe's



## Pear and Almond Flan.

Oven 200 C fan 180 C. Gas mark 6.

### Ingredients

8 oz ready made pastry, I make it from scratch, but it is a Blue Peter recipe!

3 ripe pears

1 1/2 oz butter

3 oz grated almonds

3 oz castor sugar, or granulated

1 large egg

### Method

Heat oven to 200 C fan 180 C. Gas mark 6.

Line either a loose bottom Sandwich tin, or a flan tin, approx 8 inches.

Peel & core the pears, cut into quarters or halves, depending on size of tin. Place cut side down into the lined tin.

In a bowl place butter, almonds, sugar and egg and mix well.

Spread evenly over the pears in the pastry case.

Place on baking sheet and put in the pre heated oven for 20 mins then lower heat to 180 C. 160 Fan, Gas mark 4 for a further 20 mins keeping an eye on it at the end .It should be light brown and not have any 'uncooked looking' patches on the top. Can be eaten hot, warm or cold. Freezes well.

Hope you enjoy them, and the instructions make sense as I just have the ingredients written down and have to think how I make them!





# Service pattern for Christchurch and St Mary's



|                         |       |                                                                 |
|-------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Each Month              |       |                                                                 |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Sun-day | 08:00 | BCP Holy Communion at Christ Church                             |
|                         | 10:30 | Parish Eucharist at St Mary's                                   |
|                         | 18:00 | Choral Evensong at Christ Church                                |
|                         |       |                                                                 |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sun-day | 09:00 | Parish Eucharist at St Mary's                                   |
|                         | 10:30 | Parish Eucharist at Christ Church                               |
|                         |       |                                                                 |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sun-day | 08:00 | BCP Holy Communion at Christ Church                             |
|                         | 10:30 | Parish Eucharist at St Mary's                                   |
|                         |       |                                                                 |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Sun-day | 09:00 | Parish Eucharist at St Mary's                                   |
|                         | 10:30 | Parish Eucharist at Christ Church                               |
|                         |       |                                                                 |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Sun-day |       | Benefice Service to alternate between Christ Church & St Mary's |

**Every Wednesday, there is a Holy Communion service at St. Mary's at 10.00am**

# Becoming a Lay Pastoral Assistant

Lay Pastoral Assistant? Who Me?

Are you:

- Good at listening
- Easy to talk to
- Non judgemental
- Prayerful
- Curious about people
- Compassionate
- A team player
- Sharing God's passion to care for those in need



This may be a ministry for you to explore.

Lots of people are good at caring for family and friends, but as Christians we are called to care for those who are beyond our immediate networks. This can be challenging but also very rewarding. It requires commitment and flexibility as well as compassion and support.

God always invites us to use our gifts and skills (and to be open to acquiring new ones) to show God's love to others and to care for those in need. Think what gifts and skills you have, and how you might be able to use them to serve God in this way.

In Frome Deanery, we are planning to run an 8 session Exploring Pastoral Care course (beginning in the autumn) to enable those who might be interested in this ministry to explore it further, learn new skills and deepen their sense of vocation.

If at the end of the course, you and your vicar feel that becoming a Lay Pastoral Assistant, and working as part of the ministry team, then you can apply to become a LPA. These applications are subject to diocesan safeguarding and safe recruiting protocols.

On successfully completing the application and an agreed ministry specification, you will receive a commendation from the Bishop and authorisation which lasts for 5 years unless there is a change in vicar in your parish.

Even if you decide not to take things further, you will have still learnt many things that will be of use to you and those around you.

If you have previously been a Lay Pastoral Assistant and your 5 years has passed, or you have had a new vicar, this course is also for you.

If you would like more details, please contact Revd. Liz Dudley (Frome Christ Church and St. Marys) on [vicar@christchurch-stmarys-frome.co.uk](mailto:vicar@christchurch-stmarys-frome.co.uk)

# Have you heard of Anna Chaplaincy?

We are all getting older and even as you look around the congregation at church, I am sure you will be aware of people who are not there because they find it too much, or they have moved into residential or nursing care.

In Frome, there are a number of care home and sheltered accommodation complexes, and there is much good work going on to take services and provide spiritual prayer and support. This is really encouraging and is a fantastic foundation on which to develop and Chaplaincy team across the deanery drawing on volunteers from all parishes.

But what is Anna Chaplaincy?

Anna Chaplaincy is named after the widow, Anna, who appears with Simeon in Luke's gospel; both are good role models of faithful older people. It is an accompanying, person-centred ministry of spiritual care for older people of all faiths, cultures, spiritualities and contexts, and for their families and carers.

Anna Chaplaincy also offers advocacy for older people within church and community. Anna Chaplaincy works with people living independently in their own homes, in sheltered housing and retirement complexes and in residential and nursing homes. The ministry is founded in prayer.

Anna Chaplains and Anna Friends may be members of any Christian denomination. They may be lay or ordained, paid or honorary. They must be recognised by their churches as having the necessary qualities and training for Anna Chaplaincy ministry. All Anna Chaplains and Anna Friends have a ministry specification which includes details of their line management and supervision from the local church. They are safely recruited, hold an enhanced DBS and are trained in safeguarding.

We are planning run an Exploring Anna Chaplaincy course in the autumn for those who would like to find out more.

Interested? Contact Revd Liz Dudley (Frome Christ Church and St. Mary's) on [vicar@christchurch-stmarys-frome.co.uk](mailto:vicar@christchurch-stmarys-frome.co.uk)



**PRAYER IDEAS** (of thanks or concern) for dipping into or as a pattern of prayers through the month.

**1st** Our vicar Liz, curate Harry & clergy who assist us  
**2nd** Sacristans, Servers & Chalice Bearers  
**3rd** Our future plans & outreach; The Giant's Garden  
**4th** Local Schools/Nurseries  
**5th** Those ill or infirm; Christian Healing Ministry in Frome  
**6th** The Royal Family; our MP's  
**7th** Victims of oppression, violence & discrimination

**8th** Churchwardens & PCC; Lay Readers  
**9th** Sides Persons ; Readers & Intercessors  
**10th** Our activities with young people; Christ Church School  
**11th** Local care homes; The elderly & housebound  
**12th** Frome Hospital & Medical Centres  
**13th** Climate issues; Victims of natural disasters  
**14th** War-torn countries; The Red Cross

#### Seasonal

Celebrations of Christ's birth  
Our hopes for 2024  
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity  
Holocaust Memorial Day  
Thanksgiving & remembrance for those who have died

**15th** Our Diocese & Bishops; Our Archbishops  
**16th** Those who beautify our Churches(in & out!); Music providers  
**17th** All who come to St Mary's and Christ Church  
**18th** The homeless & rough sleepers; Fair Frome  
**19th** Local Youth groups; Active & in Touch charity  
**20th** All who strive for our comfort, safety & health in winter  
**21st** Food Crises especially in East Africa; Aid Workers

**22nd** Deanery Synod & Caroline, Area Dean; Other Frome Churches  
**23rd** Those in admin roles; social events organisers  
**24th** Those recently baptised, married or bereaved  
**25th** Job centres & the jobless; The Salvation Army  
**26th** Those with mental health issues including addictions  
**27th** Migrants & refugees; ADD charity  
**28th** Residents of our twin towns; Zambia Link

**29th** Those in our parishes; Our Mayor & Council  
**30th** Those unknown to us who need prayers;  
**31st** Goodwill Children's Homes, (India)

### A Morning Prayer

O God our Father,  
Who makes the light shone out of the darkness,  
We thank thee for this new day.  
Grant that we waste none of its hours,  
Soil none of its moments,  
Neglect none of its opportunities.  
Bring us to the evening time  
Undefeated by any temptation,  
At peace with ourselves,  
At peae with our fellow-men  
And at peace with thee.  
This we ask for thy loves's sake,  
Amen

*William Barclay*

### An Evening Prayer

Now, into thy keeping of God I put  
All doings of today ,  
All disappointments,  
Hindrances, Forgotten things, negligence's,  
All gladness and beauty,  
Love, delight, achievement.  
All that people have done for me,  
All that I have done for them,  
My work and my prayers.

And I commit all the people whom I love to his shepherding,  
To his healing and restoring,  
To his calling and making;  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Margaret Cropper*

### A Prayer for The New Year

Come, Holy Spirit,  
Spirit of the Risen Christ,  
Be with us today  
And always.  
Be our Light, Our Guide,  
And our Comforter.  
Be our strength,  
our Courage,  
and our Sanctifier.  
May this New Year  
Be a time of deep  
Spiritual growth for us -  
A time of welcoming  
Your grace and gifts;  
A time for forgiving  
Freely and  
Unconditionally;  
A time for growing  
In love  
and goodness,  
Come, Holy Spirit  
Be with us today and always.  
Amen



## Pioneering with Young Adults



In this update we are highlighting some **Partnerships** which bless young adults in Frome. If you don't know us, Andrew and Elizabeth are on the right-hand side of the photo (i.e. not the young adults!)

We thank God for:

you, the Christians in Frome and the surrounding villages. Your prayers, financial (and other) gifts and co-working in other ways bring joy to us, and blessing to the young adults in and around Frome.

Bishop Michael's visit to The Giant's Garden when he discussed questions on the environment and led a service of blessing.

friends from the community and the churches who have given to, and worked in the Garden. We were especially delighted when the Frome Food Network visited to find out more, shared lunch and then helped us too! This garden is a space of safety, friendship, delight in God's creation, purpose and, often, conversation with young adults about and with God.

St Mary's Church, with us, are in discussion with the Diocese of Bath and Wells about the possibility of setting up a Christian community house in Frome in St Mary's former vicarage. A young woman is a valuable contributor to the preparatory work.

Frome YMCA, where each Friday lunchtime we are welcomed into the Frome Foyer to cook and eat with residents. They teach us a lot about life, broaden our taste in music(!) and we often speak of God or the Bible.



Frome Army Cadets and young adults and leaders, who value the presence, support and input from the Padre (Andrew) on Tuesday evenings.

Hunting Raven Books and Roots Café, enabling 1625bookclub to bless a small number of young adults.

The police and council, who welcome the 1625parkspopup team, with members from various churches. This team, which grew out of HOPE, visits Victoria and Mary Bailey parks regularly on Saturday evenings with food and or drink to share with young people. At Easter, some young people accepted our offer of a prayer of blessing, after which one young lad gathered his friends around to receive the same.

Please pray for all the young adults in Frome involved currently, or in the future, in the above.

And please join us in praying Ephesians 3.14-19, which is our prayer for the young adults in Frome:

*I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

With thanks to you, in our partnership in the gospel of Jesus,

Andrew and Elizabeth Alden, Pioneers amongst young adults in Frome



# **The Role of the Sidesperson**

I have been asked to explain the role of the Sidesperson. Well, the foregoing pretty well will explain it. I have for many years performed the duties of the Sidesperson at St Marys; when, perhaps, I whisk open the front door on a cold wet winters morning and say with some expression 'WELCOME' may seem by some to be a 'Performance' but I don't.....

## **BEFORE THE SERVICE STARTS**

Arrive at the church and open up.

Switch on the lights as required and unlock the front door and open porch door fully.

Ensure that the pew sheets, order of service and The GoodBox payment point are present. Switch on The GoodBox.

The collection plate and GA envelopes should also be present on the reception table.

Stack the hymn books with the pew sheet and order of service inserted ready for parishioners to arrive

When the person responsible for the music arrives obtain the hymn numbers and set up the hymn board.

When members of the congregation arrive They should be welcomed, especially new ones. Those that are disabled may need assistance; if they need to use a wheelchair then ramps (porch) may be needed to cope with the steps. A wheelchair is available at the back of the church.

This is the time when visitors will wish to make a donation to the church. Please point out to newcomers that we can receive donations using the The Goodbox, a wireless Card Reader. Donations of up to £30 allow us to recover the tax. The 'plate' is for cash, weekly envelopes and the Gift Aid envelopes for those who pay income tax.

## **DURING THE SERVICE**

As soon as the service starts the sidesperson needs to count the number of communicants, and using the cards place in the wooden frame on the back wall of the church, will be seen by the priest.

Late comers need to be quickly welcomed and shown to a pew near the back, if this is acceptable.

## **END OF SERVICE**

After final prayers, it will be necessary to attend at the table to receive the late donations and take in the hymn books etc.

When the congregation have left, inspect for stray hymn books etc and forgotten items.

Hymn books orders of service and spare pew sheets to returned to the shelves etc.

Obtain and fill in a 'Record of Collection' form then sign and then countersigned. Include this with the cash in a 'bag' together with the Weekly and Gift Aid Envelopes and give to the treasurer or leave in the safe. The amount received in the weekly envelopes and the Gift Aid envelopes must have the amount in them written on the front of the envelope.

The numbers on the hymn board should be removed.

## **LOCKING UP**

The responsibility for locking up the church & hall lies with the sidesperson, however, this can be passed to others who are to remain behind and will take on that responsibility.

I hope this description of the role of the sidesperson is useful; in itself it is made of many roles – Church service, Welfare, Security & Finance.

Gordon



## Some saints, and what they get up to, by Revd Harry Wainwright



I have always had a fascination with saints since childhood. Growing up in Ireland, many saints' stories were woven into Irish folklore. At the conclusion of the tale of the Children of Lir, the three children, who had been turned into swans by a cruel spell, are brought back to human form as very elderly people, and converted to Christianity by St Patrick before they die, giving the reader the happiest of endings.

We know from the great New Testament saints that their lives carry a mix of the imperfections that God's Grace can complete in their journey of holiness, coupled with aspects of their character which make them

uniquely who they are, and at the same time they are eminently relatable to us on our pilgrim journeys. While many of the tales surrounding them are apocryphal and illustrative, they nonetheless show how aspects of their piety captured peoples' imaginations in their devotions and in their prayer.

Here is a small selection of saints, whose stories and adventures have made me smile when I have encountered them. At the heart of each journey is a pilgrimage of love and faith, but this journeying can lead us into unexpected places and situations...

### *St Joseph of Cupertino*

St Joseph of Cupertino was a seventeenth century Franciscan priest who is the patron saint of aviators and astronauts. He had a rigorous devotional life and would go into spiritual ecstasies which would see him levitate up to a few feet off the ground. At least seventy of these occasions were corroborated during the investigation for his cause for sainthood.

These levitations became problematic. People would come to see them for entertainment, and he was investigated by the Inquisition under suspicion of witchcraft. The levitations became so frequent that he was confined to his cell, not allowed to say public masses owing to his levitating during the liturgy, and he was also not allowed to eat with other friars, but this isolation only served to deepen his prayer life and drew him closer to God.

There were notable examples of Joseph's levitating, including one instance where he levitated ten feet into the air in front of the Spanish ambassador on seeing a statue of Mary. Having flown to the statue, he prayed, flew back to the door of the church and went home. On meeting Pope Urban VIII, when it was customary to kiss the Pope's feet, Joseph rose into the air on doing so, and was only able to come back down when the Pope ordered him to do so.

### *St Martin de Porres*

Other saints, including St Francis, St Teresa of Avila and St Thomas Aquinas are also known to have levitated, albeit with a lesser proficiency. St Martin de Porres of Lima could levitate and feats of bilocation were also recorded, but the story of his dealings with mice is well worth including here.





His monastery became infested with mice, which caused a lot of damage because of their constant need to chew. St. Martin held a meeting with mice, beckoning them to the garden, where they met him as a group. He told the hundreds of gathered mice that if they remained outdoors, he would care for them. The saint then walked to the far end of the monastery grounds, with the mice forming a line behind him. They never returned to trouble the other monks.



### *St Brigid's Cross, made out of cut rushes*

Although St Patrick is widely known as the patron saint of Ireland, there are three saints which can also lay claim to this title. St Patrick is known for banishing all snakes from Ireland while St Columba had his run-in with the Loch Ness Monster, but St Brigid, whose feast day is on February 1<sup>st</sup>, also figures prominently as a major figure in Irish saintly folklore as the island's patroness.

Born in the mid-5th century, Brigid was the daughter of a pagan chieftain and a Christian slave. Despite her father's status, her early years were marked by hardship. She was known for her piety from a young age. After converting to Christianity, she dedicated her life to serving God and the poor and founding a monastery in County Kildare. Her reed crosses, traditionally made on her feast day, are often seen in houses in Ireland.

She is known for her healing miracles, but two others are noteworthy. When Brigid asked the King of Leinster for land to build her monastery, he mockingly suggested she could have as much land as her cloak could cover. Miraculously, her cloak expanded to cover a vast tract of land, enough to establish her monastery. In a twist on the miracle at Cana, she is also said to have turned water into beer for a visiting clergyman and his companions.

### *St Piran*

There is no end of Irish Saints, but one interesting Cornish saint, indeed the patron saint of Cornwall, is St Piran. He lived in the fifth century and was possibly born in Ireland before being expelled in an interesting manner. The Irish tied him to a mill stone and rolled it off a cliff into a stormy sea. The sea was becalmed and St Piran floated over the water to Cornwall. His first disciples were said to have been a bear, a badger and a fox.



Piran lived as a hermit, but his Christian converts joined him and they founded the Abbey of Lanpiran (the Church of Piran) with the saint as abbot. He is the patron saint of tin smelters, having rediscovered the methods which had been lost after the Romans had departed. He had a slab of ore containing tin, which rose to the top in the form of a white cross, giving us the image on the Cornish flag.



### *St Anthony holding the child Jesus with a lily, a symbol of purity*

St Anthony of Padua was a Franciscan priest who lived in thirteenth century Italy. He might have lived a quiet life as an unknown friar if he hadn't gone to an ordination of Dominicans and Franciscans in 1222. While he was there, Anthony was asked to give a "simple" sermon. When Anthony began to speak, his holiness and knowledge impressed everyone. St. Francis heard of Anthony's previously hidden gifts, and assigned Anthony to preach in northern Italy. As many as 30,000 people would crowd to hear him.

Rimini was a hotbed of heresy at this time, and the city leaders had ordered everyone to ignore Anthony when he visited. As he walked outside of the town, he came to the mouth of the Marecchia River. There he began to address the crowds, not of people but of fish. He called out, "You, fish of the river and sea, listen to the Word of God because the heretics do not wish to hear it." Suddenly there were thousands of fish neatly arranged in rows, all pushing their heads through the surface of the water as if they were straining to listen to his words.

Anthony is the patron saint of lost items, and many Catholic churches in Ireland would have statues for people to pray to him to recover something – not necessarily material – which had been lost. It stems from a disaffected novice stealing Anthony's psalter, which contained all of his preaching notes, and leaving his monastery. The saint prayed for its safe return, whereupon the novice saw a vision which compelled him to return the book and also to return to the Order.

### *St Valentine kneeling in supplication*

Given the time of year, it would be remiss not to include St Valentine. He is still recognized by the Roman Catholic Church as a saint, but he was taken off the Calendar in 1969 because of a lack of reliable information about him. As well as being the patron saint of lovers, he also is patron of epileptics and beekeepers.

He was a Roman priest and doctor martyred in a persecution around 270. Two common legends abound, one being that he wrote a letter to his jailer's daughter and signed it "from your Valentine", the other being that he secretly married couples in defiance of the emperor's orders to spare the husbands from going to war.

Hopefully this short journey in the company of a motley crew of saints will have sparked your interest in their lives and journeys. At the heart of their stories is the truth that, in their humanity and individual beauty, they have responded in love to God's call and they have inspired many others in their journeys of faith.





## Visit to Christchurch School



The OTB team of storytellers are visiting Christ Church School for collective worship each month. The children enjoy taking an active role in the story telling.

On our last visit we told the story of Abraham, who became God's loyal friend. He trusted God and he and his wife Sarah were rewarded with a longed-for baby. The children were very amused to learn that the baby's name, Isaac, means "laughter". Reverend Liz asked if there was anyone in the school named Isaac but there was not!

Next time we will be exploring the story of Joseph and his coat of many colours.



### **Please pray for Christ Church C of E First School**

Remember the pupils, parents and staff at Christ Church C of E First School and in your thoughts and prayers.

We pray for the wellbeing of pupils and their families, the staff and governors. We ask that God will grant them all good health and the joy of a light heart, wisdom, courage, and kindness.

We pray that the school will shine brightly, as a beacon of Christ's love.

## Parish Giving Scheme

Asking for money is never easy and in the current climate, it is even harder. At the end of each year, our treasurers (Richard at Christ Church and Glen at St. Mary's) sort out the accounts to be externally examined in readiness for the Annual Meetings in April.

Throughout the year, they keep the PCCs informed about the financial picture and enable us to make decisions about the way best forward. In 2024, the Parish Share, which is the amount that each parish pays into a common fund that ensures the provision of ministry across the Diocese, has increased.

For Christ Church it is £28,424 and for St. Mary's it is £22,448.

This amount takes into account the number of regular (monthly) worshippers and the socioeconomic status of the congregation. Based on the numbers that we submit to the Diocese each year, it works out at around £692 per regular worshipper. This looks like a weekly offering of £13.50. Nationally, the suggested weekly offering is £16 per worshipper.

After we have paid the parish share, then we get to pay everything else, like heating, lighting, insurance, office costs, candles, wine etc.

For some in our congregations, this amount is impossible to give, and for others it is less than they are already giving. However, at our last PCC meetings it was felt that these figures should be shared more widely to enable us to collectively take responsibility for our finances.

As Christians, we are called to cheerful and sacrificial giving. Many people will also be supporting other charities and it is for each person to make an informed and prayerful decision about where their resources are given. No one should feel that they are not able to come to church because they 'can't afford' to. I am very aware of what people give that isn't cash, in terms of energy, prayer, hospitality, time and goodwill; and I cannot thank you enough for what is already so generously given.

One way to maximise the value of your offerings, is to give it in the most efficient way.

If you are a tax payer and you don't already use gift aid, please will you? The money that we receive back from HMRC is significant.

If you don't pay tax, the most efficient way to give is to either put cash on the collection plates on the way into church as we can then claim gift aid through the small donations scheme.

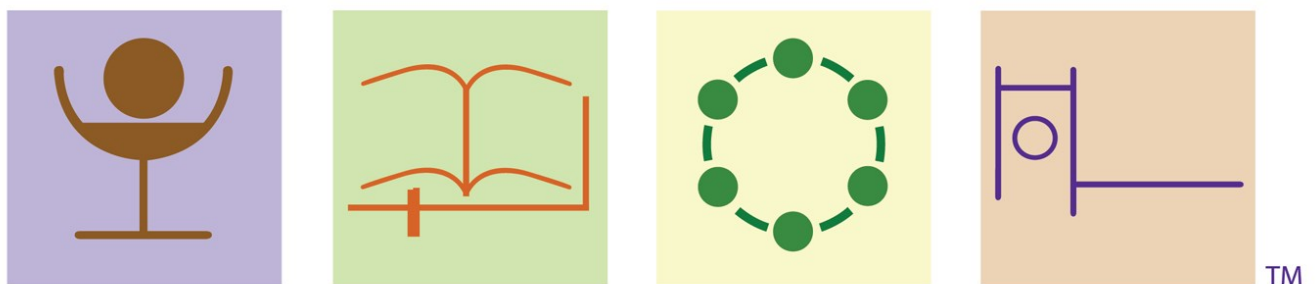
This also applies if you use the contactless devices.

Both churches have now signed up to the Parish Giving Scheme. If you currently give by standing order, please would you consider using this scheme? It reduces the amount of work for treasurers and gift aid officers and creates a predictable income each month.

You can also ask to be reminded to increase your giving each year inline with inflation!

Money can be a worrying thing, so if you would like to know more, please speak to Richard/ Glen or Revd Liz.

Tech help is also available if you are not confident doing things online. <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/home/>



PARISHGIVINGSCHEME



# Calling All Gardeners

## **Gardening Together Presents: Frome Pop-Up Allotments - Cultivating Community, Growing Together**

Are you passionate about gardening, connecting with like-minded individuals, and fostering a sense of community right here in Frome? If so, we have some exciting news for you! Gardening Together, a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening our community through gardening, is thrilled to introduce Frome's first Pop-Up Allotments.

### **What are Pop-Up Allotments?**

Pop-Up Allotments are a novel approach to community gardening that empowers aspiring gardeners and landowners alike to come together, nurture green spaces, and grow their very own fruits and vegetables. We envision these allotments as vibrant oases of growth and connection, breathing life into under-utilised spaces around Frome. As we embark on this journey, we are exploring two potential sites right now that will serve as lush havens for gardeners of all ages and backgrounds.

### **How it Works:**

- 1. Aspiring Gardeners:** If you've always dreamed of cultivating your green thumb but lack a dedicated gardening space, Pop-Up Allotments offer you the perfect opportunity. You'll be assigned an individual plot where you can unleash your creativity, planting your favourite fruits, vegetables, and vibrant flowers.
- 2. Community Fruit and Perennial Veg Plots:** At Pop-Up Allotments, we believe in nurturing not only individual gardeners but also a strong sense of community. To further this vision, we will be creating shared spaces for fruits and perennial vegetables. Imagine a bountiful communal garden where members can enjoy the fruits of collective labor.

**Landowners:** We have two potential sites, but are always looking for more. Do you own land that could flourish with greenery and purpose? By participating in Pop-Up Allotments, you will be contributing to the beautification of Frome but also fostering community engagement and sustainable practices.

### **Join the waiting list (It's a Lot Shorter Than the Regular Allotment List):**

To make this dream a reality, we invite all gardening enthusiasts and landowners to join us on this exciting journey. Gardeners, please join the waiting list by visiting [gardeningtogether.org](http://gardeningtogether.org)

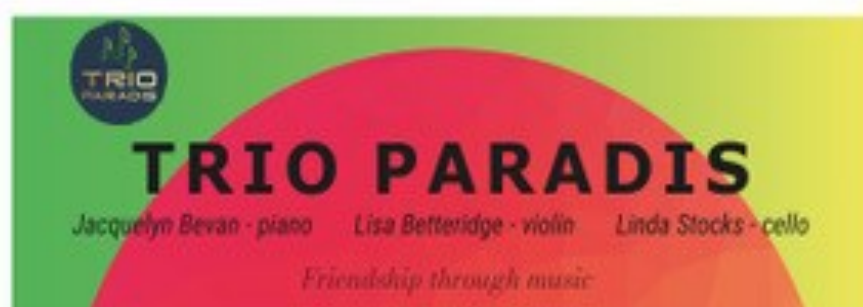
### **Landowners, Contact Us:**

Landowners interested in participating and transforming their land into green havens for the community, please contact us at [Kieran@gardeningtogether.org](mailto:Kieran@gardeningtogether.org). Your generous contribution will help create thriving allotments, making a positive impact on our beloved Frome.

Together, let's sow the seeds of community and growth as we cultivate a greener, more connected future for Frome!

With green thumbs and warm hearts,  
The Gardening Together Team

Kind regards,  
Kieran Hayes Saunders



## 2024 Café Concerts at Christchurch, Frome

Trio Paradis play a Café Concert on the first Thursday of each month (Feb-Dec) at 1.15pm at Christ Church.

Informal feel-good music events with a pop-up café open from c12.45pm where you can meet friends and make new ones over tea/coffee and home-made cakes and listen to live music. (It's £3.50-£4 for a cake and a drink.) Concerts last c45mins and entrance - or rather, exit(!) - is by pay-what-you-feel donation. There's no need to book, just turn up - maybe bring a cushion for the pew.

We need one or two extra volunteers in 2024 to help run the café (12.30-1.15pm) or with washing up (2-2.15pm). Please come and say hello to Ann or one of the Trio on the day.

### 2nd February: *Iberia*

A collection of exhilarating Spanish music to warm up the dampest of February days.

### 7th March: *Daughters of the Muse*:

Music by women composers, including Lili Boulanger, Rosalind Ellicott, Germaine Tailleferre and C12th abbess Hildegard von Bingen.

### 4th April

The theme of this month is *Birdsong*



## Heavens above

This month I thought that we would have a bit of a look at the Orion Nebula also known as Messier 42. Orion is very prominent throughout the winter months and one of the easier constellations to see with the naked eye. It is what is known as a diffuse nebula which means that it is extended and contains no well defined boundaries.

The Nebula itself is in the middle of the line of three stars dropping north to south which is Orions sword again quite easy to see and sits below the star Alnitak which is the left of the three stars representing Orions belt. Alnitak lies at a distance of 800 light years from us.

According to modern astronomers, the Orion Nebula is an enormous cloud of gas and dust, one of many in our Milky Way galaxy. It lies roughly 1,300 light-years from Earth making it the closest large star-forming region to us. At some 30 to 40 light-years in diameter, this great nebulous cocoon is giving birth to perhaps a thousand stars. A young open star cluster, whose stars were born together in the gas cloud and are still loosely bound by gravity, appears within the nebula. Some people refer to it as the Orion Nebula Star Cluster. In 2012, an international team of astronomers suggested this cluster in the Orion Nebula might have a black hole at its heart.

Through small telescopes you can see the four brightest stars in the Orion Nebula, known as the Trapezium. The light of the young, hot Trapezium stars illuminate the Orion Nebula.

These stars are only a million or so years old, babies on the scale of star lifetimes. But most of the stars in this emerging cluster are veiled behind the Orion Nebula itself, the great stellar nursery in Orion's Sword.

However thanks to new images of the Orion Nebula from the James Webb Space Telescope, astronomers have discovered dozens of mysterious celestial bodies that defy their understanding of how stars and planets form. Researchers have named them Jupiter Mass Binary Objects—or JuMBOs for short—and they may represent a brand-new astronomical category.

The baffling objects are too small to be stars, and because none orbit a parent star, they can't be technically classified as planets, either.

"It seems we're missing something in all of the theories we've got so far," says Matthew Bate, an astrophysicist at the University of Exeter in England who was not involved in the new observations, to the Guardian's Hannah Devlin. "It seems that there's a mechanism that's forming these [objects] that we haven't thought of yet." Yet again we see that although man has studied the stars for many hundreds of years and has built up a very good in-depth catalogue of information there is still plenty out there waiting for discovery and possibly the re-classification in what we know at present.



With information from what the JWST is observing the future is very exciting indeed, the telescope has only been in orbit for a couple of years yet the information sent back has expanded our understanding ten fold or more and given us a lot more to think about.

The night skies this winter have been extremely overcast leaving precious little time to do any observing, but clear they did on 19 th December so I was able to have a few hours out in the back yard to image the Orion nebula. The image with this article is my own.

I hope you like it! and please note the “Trapizium of the four young stars and the gaseous clouds and dark lanes of dust in and around the nebula”. Here’s hoping for clear skies.



## **Prayers for same-sex relationships**

Many of you will have been watching the news in the Church of England as it has been slowly unfolding through numerous synods, about the provision for blessing same sex relationships. As sometimes happens, things which seem to be moving slowly suddenly gather speed and take us by surprise. Thus, in the week before Christmas, the House of Bishops gave permission for prayers of blessing for same sex relationships to be used in existing regular services.

This decision is going to have a significant effect on the Church of England as a body, and it will have left some people thinking that it is a step too far, for others it is a step too small, and for others yet, it is not something they really want to have to think about. Some of you might be feeling anxious, confused or disappointed. Just as way of reassurance, wherever you might find yourself, your welcome and your place within our churches is assured.

However, we as a congregation and as a church will need to move forward, keeping our focus on our calling to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ in our world today. We have to face the reality that beliefs and understandings of what this means are sincerely held on both sides of debate, and that the way forward is not about winning arguments or getting people to change their minds but to humbly follow the voice of God in our lives, which demands of us patience, humility and grace. Bishop Michael is keen that clergy and congregations work together and support each other in deciding whether to offer these prayers or not, in such a way that we are not in such conflict with each other that the mission of the church and its life is disrupted and derailed.

How we are to walk forwards together where there is disagreement is so important. Historically, the church has done this really badly, either sweeping the elephants in the room under the enormous carpet, or splitting away from each other. My personal feeling is, that this is a God given opportunity to model to a world that is watching, a new way of working together, committing to walk in the paths of peace even if those paths are steep and rugged.

If anyone would like to have a conversation with myself or Revd Harry about this, then please don't hesitate to get in touch. The kettle is always on somewhere and we are longing to listen.

The Diocese is also offering parishes a supported way of having this important conversation. They have made available a process of discernment called 'Seeking God's way Together'.

It's two underlying principles are:

God is present and at work:

Within each of us because God created us and loves us. That is what gives us the

confidence to listen to God, notice God and speak about our experience of God.

In the world because God created the world and continues to be present and active in the world. This means that we commit to looking for signs of God not just in our church and congregation but in the wider community and world.

God speaks to us through the Word:

Scripture is a key way in which God speaks to us. We are not all biblical scholars, but we can all listen to God through scripture and ask the Holy Spirit to show us what it is important for us to hear. Everyone is invited to come along to a gathering on Saturday 17th February in Christ Church Hall (Park Road) 10-midday (refreshments from 9.30) to begin this process of discernment. The Diocese have provided us with a facilitator to help us think about the following question:

**What would opting in, or not opting in to using the Prayers of Love and Faith mean for us as a Christian Community.**

Please ponder this question, pray about it, talk about it with friends and then come along and help us journey forwards together. You can read the prayers for yourselves (please do!), Bishop Michael's address to Diocesan Synod and his pastoral letter here. <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/faith/living-in-love-faith/living-in-love-faith>

If you would like a paper copy, please let the churchwardens or clergy know and we can get them to you.

Revd Liz

# Lent 2024

I wrote in my pastoral letter, Lent is a time for coming together and journeying into the wilderness. It is a time to commit to one another in this journey and reaffirm our trust in the One who leads us.

This year, we are offering three group each week during Lent.

- Monday 12.30- 3pm in St Marys  
– soup provided but bring a sandwich
- Tuesday 12.30-3pm in Christ Church  
– soup provided and bring a sandwich
- Monday 7.30pm in The Ship

All groups begin the week from Monday 19th February and there are five sessions

The book we will be following is A Way Through the Wilderness – Experiencing God’s help in times of Crisis by Paula Gooder

As this book may well be out of print, we will provide you with the info you need, so please don’t worry if you can’t get hold of the book.

Sign up sheets are in each church and please add your name or email to [admin@christchurch-stmarys-frome.co.uk](mailto:admin@christchurch-stmarys-frome.co.uk) so we know how many handouts and how much soup to make.

~~~~~

Easter Services—Easter is early this year.

The services will be as follows

Palm Sunday March 24th :

9am Parish Eucharist at St. Marys

10.30 Parish Eucharist at Christ Church

This is the start of Holy week and during the service we hear the story of the events leading up to Good Friday.

We will also be blessing and distributing palm crosses

Monday to Wednesday

8pm Meditation and worship around the event of Holy Week led by Revd Harry. (Venue tbc)

Maundy Thursday

7.30pm The Last Supper and vigil at St. Mary’s

This is a quiet intimate service where remember how Jesus washed his disciples’ feet as they gathered in the upper room. Following the service there is an opportunity to watch and wait a while with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.

Good Friday

1-3pm in Christ Church

A service of music, readings and silence as we remember Jesus' last hours on the cross.

Holy Saturday

A day for private prayer and reflection as we ponder the death of Jesus

Easter Sunday

6am Dawn Eucharist at St. Marys

This service take place out of doors, beginning in darkness, as we gather around a fire and

tell the stories of our faith. From the fire, the Paschal Candles are lit in both churches. The

service is followed by breakfast in the church hall

10.30am Festival Eucharist at Christ Church with Easter Egg Hunt

This service celebrates the resurrection. We bless the Easter Garden, light the Easter Light and sing God's praises. There is an opportunity to renew our baptismal promises and to be washed with the waters of New Life. After the service there is an Easter Egg hunt in the churchyard.

Please check the website or pewsheets for definite details nearer the time.



Naked Nature

January is the month of looking back and forth and nature gives us a clear view through the denuded trees and hedges.

My favourite month.

Out cycling I spot deer, hare and foxes seeking food and shelter.

Many small birds also come into view, finches , tits and the noisy rattling mistle thrush. At Vobster the peregrine falcons sit and watch the cold water swimmers quizzically. On frozen lakes kingfishers are easy to spot adding a distinctive colour flash.

Some animals hibernate so no hedgehogs or toads to view but aren't the sunrises and sunsets magnificent? The warming splash of oranges and reds contrast with the white hoar frosts just inspire a painting or photograph.

Out walking, wearing a white woolly hat I noticed a kite above me circling round tracking my progress, did it mistake me for a rabbit?

The next day crossing a field I encountered a pair of llamas - no shelter , but Packsaddle is probably more hospitable than the Andes.

To complete the hatrick on the third day Storm Gerrit assisted a wheelie bin to tailgate me. What a collection of followers!

Why do we have winter?

Psalm 74 : 17 God created seasons as boundaries...
Thus nature can operate, hibernate and recuperate.

Eleanor Rocket



**THE BIG
PLASTIC
COUNT
11-17 MARCH**

We all know that we are producing and throwing away too much plastic and that the whole of creation is being polluted by it. The UK produces more plastic packaging per person than almost any other country in the world and our recycling systems cannot cope. We also know that it is really hard to avoid plastic packaging, especially when buying food.

By joining in the Big Plastic Count and committing to count your plastic for a week, we can help gather the evidence and data to push our government, supermarkets and other producers to come up with alternatives.

The Big Plastic count takes place between March 11th -17th and you can use the form in the magazine or download your own from <https://thebigplasticcount.com>

Caring for the creation is at the heart of our Christian faith and so we are inviting you to bring your plastic along to Christ Church on **Saturday 16th March (10-12)** and as part of the Frome Kindness Festival, we will lay it out around the church, lament our part in the destruction of creation and then with the help of artistic people we will create an angel..

God's redemptive work brings beauty from brokenness and angels are messengers from God.. so we will be thinking about what might God's message be to us, the Church, but also what message can we share with the world?

All are welcome.. especially artistic people

**THE BIG
PLASTIC
COUNT**
11-17 MARCH

LET'S COUNT!

GREENPEACE x **EVERYDAY
PLASTIC**







TALLY SHEET






Print this off and stick it somewhere you'll see it, then tally the types of plastic packaging you throw away each day.

Tick off the days as you count your plastic:




M T W T F S S




FOOD & DRINK

	Small bottles (up to 500ml) (water, soft drinks, sauces etc.)	Total
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Large bottles (over 500ml) (water, squash, cooking oil, milk etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Hard plastic caps and lids (from bottles, cartons, jars etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Peelable film lids (from soft fruits, fish, falafels, dips etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Fruit and veg trays, pots and their hard lids (berries, grapes, stir fry, tomatoes etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Fruit, veg and salad bags, wrappers and nets (salad, bananas, cucumber, lemons etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>


	Black pots, tubs and trays (ready meals, chilled foods, cooked meats etc.)	Total
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Pots, tubs and trays (yoghurt, dips, butter, pastries, meat etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Snack bags, packets and wrappers (crisps, biscuits, cereal bars, chocolate etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Other hard food and drink packaging (coffee pods, plastic corks, polystyrene cups etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Other soft food and drink packaging (rice, bread bags, frozen peas, cling film, cheese etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>


CLEANING & TOILETRIES

	Small bottles (up to 500ml) (hand wash, shampoo, washing up liquid etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Large bottles (over 500ml) (toilet cleaner, bleach, surface cleaner etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Pots, tubs and tubes (moisturiser, suncream, laundry tablets etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

	Squeezy tubes (toothpaste, make-up, skincare cream etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Other hard cleaning and toiletries packaging (toothbrush packs, razor packs, mascara etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Other soft cleaning and toiletries packaging (toilet roll wrap, dishwasher tabs, wet wipes packs etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

EVERYTHING ELSE

	Other hard plastic packaging (plastic packaging for toys, tech, stationery, DIY etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

	Other soft plastic packaging (pet food pouches, carrier bags, bubble wrap etc.)	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

SUBMIT YOUR RESULTS

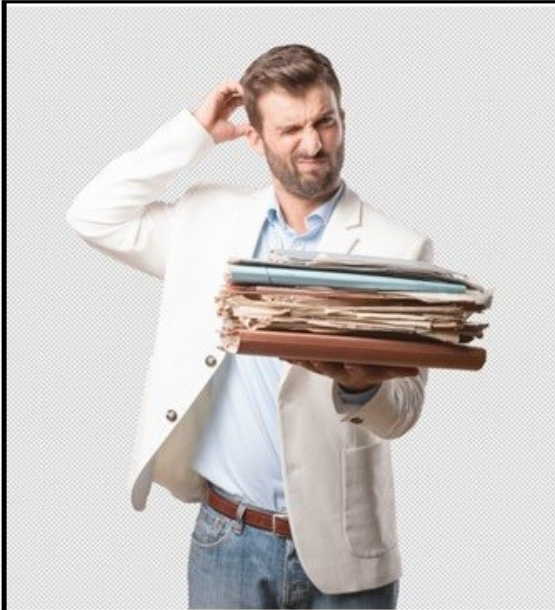
Submit your findings at:
thebigplasticcount.com/submit
or scan the QR code to the right.



NOT SURE WHERE TO PUT AN ITEM?

Check out our Plastic ID tool:
thebigplasticcount.com/help
or scan the QR code to the right.





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Please submit any articles for
the May/June/July Magazine
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