

Norton-in-Hales Monthly Messenger March 2018



Website: www.nortoninhales.org



Annual Subscription Renewal

If you would like to continue receiving the Norton in Hales Monthly Messenger, please can you pay the annual subscription of **£3** to your local distributor as soon as possible. If you would like to start a subscription then please contact Hannah Hague email hannahmariahague@yahoo.co.uk

Dates for your diary



| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Sunday 4 th March | Praise and Worship Service at 11:15am, St Chads (John 2:13-22) |
| Thursday 8 th March | Norton in Bloom Monthly Meeting, 7:30pm at the Hinds Head. All Welcome |
| Sunday 11 th March | Mothering Sunday Service at 11:15am, St Chads (Exodus 2:1-10; Colossians 3:12-17) |
| Sunday 18 th March | BCP Morning Prayer Service at 11:15am, St Chads (Psalm 119:9-16; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33) |
| Thursday 22 nd March | Video Lecture – Keele World Affairs Series , ‘After ISIS – Stability in the middle east?’ with Michael Stephens (Research fellow for Middle East studies RUSI) 7:30pm at the Jubilee Hall, £1 inc Tea & Biscuits |
| Sunday 25 th March | Palm Sunday Celebration at Aston, 10:30am - No service at St Chad’s this day. |
| Friday 30 th March | Good Friday Service at St Leonard’s Woore, 2:30pm |
| Sunday 1 st April | Easter Family Communion at 11:15am, St Chads |

Tuesday Coffee Mornings

In the village hall from 10am – 11.30 everyone welcome.

St Chad’s Flower and Cleaning Rota for March

FLOWERS

March - No flowers during Lent

CLEANING

Mrs E Rowley

.....
April 1st - Easter Sunday - Festival flower arrangers

For any contributions to the Monthly Messenger, please email hannahmariahague@yahoo.co.uk

Deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month.



A View from the Vicarage

David Briscoe once wrote, "There is a warning here for those of us who have ample access to God's Word, who have Bibles we can read regularly, who attend services where the Word is preached faithfully. We can become so familiar with the message, we can so enjoy the sound of it and bask in the beauty of it, that we become desensitized to the meaning and impact of it." [*The One Year Devotions for Men*, p. 12] These words truly hit home with me as I was going through a phase which can be described best as desensitized. I was going through the motions, despite my beliefs and deep faith.

I really had to stop and think. Was I so familiar with the Scriptures and so secure in my beliefs that I was taking them for granted? I even wondered how special and important it all was to me. That was scary! We are in the season of Lent—a time of reflection on our relationship with God. We are to look at our failings and mistakes to understand our need for a Saviour—for Jesus to die on the Cross. We do it every year and it has become familiar and routine. That is dangerous!

It's dangerous because it can make us lackadaisical in our faith. It is just there. And that's when it becomes ordinary and nothing special. But God's love for us is incredibly special. He created us in love and loves us unconditionally, but He also wants us to choose to love Him back. Think about the people you love. What separates them from others? They are special, and they are precious to us. We can't imagine not having them in our lives. That's how God feels about you! And that's how He hopes you feel about Him too. Do you?

On the fourth Sunday in Lent, which this year is on 11th March, we will gather at 11:15am at St Chad's for a special Mothering Sunday celebration. We honour mothers, but it traditionally was a special Sunday when servants were given the day off to be able to go home to their mother church and be with their families. Mothers don't necessarily have to be our biological mum; they can be any woman who has had a special impact on our lives. They are special and on this Sunday, we celebrate their love and our love for them with a special family-friendly worship service during which the children present a small bouquet of flowers to all mums in attendance, with light refreshments following the service. As a result, we are moving the usual BCP Morning Prayer service to the third Sunday in place of the family service.

At the end of the month, the church will gather at St Mary's Chapel in the Aston Village Hall at 10:30am Palm Sunday service. Waving our palms and processing around the village, we remember Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Jesus knew He was going to face His death on the Cross, but His followers, despite His predictions, did not see it coming.

This year, why not come and walk with us, and as we walk put yourself into that original Palm Sunday parade into Jerusalem. What are your expectations? What does this man Jesus mean to you? Then continue that walk through the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, the trial and crucifixion on Good Friday, and His burial in the tomb. Your joy is shattered! Your hope is dead! Now what?

God thinks you are so special and so important to Him, that He chose to send His Son Jesus to die on the Cross as an atonement for our sins. There probably isn't a death as painful and humiliating as to die hanging on a cross. Wow! Imagine sacrificing your only son to save others you love from an eternal death. I don't know about you, but that is immensely humbling for me. It also makes me embarrassed that I might ever take it for granted. That's why the Good Friday service is so important. It will be at St Leonard's Woore this year at 2:30pm on Friday the 30th.

Experience and feel this story anew. It is my hope that you will be transformed again, and your faith will be energized beyond your expectations. Let the familiar story overwhelm you, and then come and celebrate Jesus' Resurrection on Sunday 1st April at 11:15am at St Chad's.

Rev. Don Alcock
Telephone: 01630 647 911
Email: dga952@hotmail.com



Norton in Bloom Newsletter

March 2018

On the vegetable plot

Plant onions, shallots and garlic sets.

Plant Jerusalem artichoke tubers.

Chit early and maincrop potatoes.

Plant asparagus crowns.

Sow seed outdoors in mild areas with light soil, eg: broad beans, carrots, parsnips, beetroot, onions, lettuces, radish, peas, spinach, summer cabbage, salad leaves, leeks, Swiss chard, kohlrabi, turnip and summer cauliflower. Be guided by the weather, and sow only if conditions are suitable.

Sow seed indoors of sweet peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, aubergines, celery, salads and globe artichokes.
(RHS Advice)

The village planting theme this year, linked to entry to the Heart of England competition is "Nature in Habitats". This would let us concentrate on encouraging wildlife with plants under the RHS heading 'Perfect for Pollinators' (the bee symbol you see on plants at garden centres) and more sustainable planting.

The colour scheme will be gold, orange and yellow. Please consider this when selecting plants for your front garden.

Jobs for March

1 Protect new spring shoots from slugs

2 Plant shallots, onion sets and early potatoes

3 Plant summer-flowering bulbs

4 Lift and divide overgrown clumps of perennials

5 Top dress containers with fresh compost

6 Mow the lawn on dry days (if needed)

7 Cut back Cornus (dogwood) and Salix (willow) grown for colourful winter stems

8 Hoe and mulch weeds to keep them under control early

9 Start feeding fish and using the pond fountain; remove pond heaters

10 Prune bush and climbing roses

Parton's Pool

Recent work has included tree pruning and the creation of bug hotels and log piles to encourage wildlife.

The Norton in Bloom group meets at The Hind's Head every month. This year meetings will take place on the second Thursday in the month at 7.30pm. New members are very welcome.

The next two meetings are 8th March and 12th April.



Norton Nature Notes

21st January to 20th February 2018

I was lucky enough to watch a Peregrine Falcon fly low over the village on the afternoon of Friday 16th February. She moved at speed and low, at the height of the top of the church tower - although I am not sure how much notice she took of the village as she flew from Napley and across Main Road. With wing slightly bent and a narrow tail she moved at speed with no intention of going for prey. She may have already flushed some pigeons gathered lower in the valley along the Tern. I say 'she' as I considered the falcon that I was watching to be relatively large, although without something to compare to I may have been wrong. As is the case with most birds of prey the female is larger than the male, with the Peregrine this is about a third larger - the fact they share the same plumage makes it more difficult to separate them.

At the end of January a large gathering of Lapwing, made up of several flocks, came together among the sheep in the field to the south of the village. As one flock they went up several times after being disturbed, but soon settled again. When in flight I counted approximately 230 birds. After an hour or so they dispersed in different directions. The Starlings and gulls, which had joined the Lapwing in a mixed flock on the open farmland, remained grounded as the Lapwing, a cautious but aggressive bird (when protecting its nest), took to the wing, circled a few times and descended to resume their probing of the ground for insects.

At the time of writing there is still no frogspawn in Parton's Pool. I do hope we get some over the coming weeks. Unfortunately the Common Frog is no longer as common - natural habitat and water features provided in gardens are declining. Only about 1 in 50 tadpoles will move out of the pond and become a breeding adult, so just think how important that clump of frogspawn is!

How many Greenfinches have you seen in your garden or around the village this winter? The species is being affected by Trichomonosis, a disease caused by a parasite. The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) has recorded quite a rapid decline in Greenfinch over the past 10 years. I have had a report that that three Greenfinch were found dead beneath a feeder in the village possibly showing the symptoms of Trichomonosis - problems with the throat and gullet with fluffed up plumage and excess food around the bill. What can we do? The BTO suggests regular cleaning of the bird table, feeders and drinking stations with a weak disinfectant and if you ground feed, or have excessive spillage of feed to the ground, to try rotating to another area.

Many of us are thinking about our 'first of the year' and keeping eyes and ears open as we walk the lanes and paths of the village, work outside or approach the village in our cars. We are lucky to live surrounded by nature's signs. Malcom M reported that he was greeted by Song Thrush song first thing in the morning around the same time as last year (January 30th) and Ron L of Betton has noticed that even though we have had a particularly cold and wet start to the year the Daffodils under his Turner's oak have bloomed nearly two weeks earlier than usual. The first blooms appeared on the 18th January - the earliest Ron has known. Richard J had a pleasant surprise when 20 or more Honey bees landed on a substantial drift of Snowdrops on the 18th February - the sound recalling summer days! Richard also heard his first drumming woodpecker on the 5th February near Brand Hall.

Just think, before I write the next Nature Notes our Swallows will probably have started their long journey home. The Swallows that you watched last summer sat on the telephone lines outside your house, flying low over the fields, or nesting in the eaves, are somewhere below the Sahara towards South Africa and remembering our little village.

Please contact me with your 'first sightings of the year' as they appear and anything else you may happen to spot in the Parish.