



Lent, Lengthening days, and Creation



From Brother Clark, Hilfield Guardian:

The Hilfield Community is observing the Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting and study in an interesting way this year. On Tuesday afternoons we gather for a study time, to consider aspects of creation such as light, water, lights in the sky.

These are themes from Ruth Valerio's book "*Saying Yes to Life*", the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent 2020 book. Her book provides us with inspiration and guidance, but community members embroider on it freely. Each week a different person or persons present a topic. It is interesting and enriches our prayers and meditation.

Our reading after supper follows Valerio's themes too, further opportunity to pray and reflect on how we affirm life and commit ourselves to taking better care of creation. On Thursdays we fast from technology—turning off our TV, radio, phones and computers. It's a discipline not a punishment, so the internet stays connected; guests may use it, and community members may grapple with the temptation. It enables us to focus more carefully on each other, and in the evenings, there is a community time for the friary family to be together in a relaxed way.

From our programme for 2020 :

We are fully booked for the crafting weekend 19-22 March, Holy Week and Easter, and the Psalms weekend 19-21 June.

Places are available on the Spring Seasonal Retreat 22nd – 24th May, and 'The world beneath your feet' Saturday 27th June, led by Tony Fry

See <https://hilfieldfriary.org.uk/2020-programme/>



The Hilfield Community

Continuing the Franciscan witness, long-established at the Friary, the Community consists of both vowed Franciscan Brothers of the Anglican Society of St Francis and also lay community members who seek to nurture and share the Franciscan values of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Inspired by St Francis of Assisi, the Community offers hospitality to people of different faiths and no acknowledged faith and works for a more gentle and respectful care for the earth.

March in the kitchen garden

With so much rain, it has been difficult to get into the garden to sow seeds. Which is why the protection of greenhouse and poly tunnel at Hilfield has been such a boon. Either sowing directly into modular trays (larger seeds individually such as broad beans or multi sown onions, leeks and radishes) or pricking smaller seedlings into the modules allows early and stronger plants ready for planting out when the weather improves (but don't forget to harden off before planting out.)



Fruit and rose pruning is now completed and already the jostaberry bushes are in bud. Spring is just around the corner if it can just fit in around the sleet and hail!

We have planted our early potatoes in old fertiliser sacks in the poly tunnel. Horizontal 3cm slits have been cut about 4cm up from ground level to give drainage but also to capture excess water in the reservoir produced. It is amazing how much water they will need as they grow! *Tony*

... and in the kitchen ...

... we regularly reassess how we're doing with the LOAF principles that we aim to meet in our food purchasing. **L**ocally produced, **O**rganically grown, **A**nimal friendly, **F**airly traded. We had more than 100kg soft fruit last year, and are still eating it! This year we hope to increase food production. We eat eggs from our chickens and meat from our own animals twice a week. We eat nose to tail and all in between!

What we can't grow, or grow enough of, we buy mostly from Riverford Organics – who supply ethically sourced and produced milk and food. Our flour (organic, stoneground) comes from Stoates Mill near Shaftesbury. Our honey comes from local growers and all our jams and marmalades are made in our kitchen.

Everyone in the Friary takes a turn in the kitchen. Buying, growing and preparing food is an important part of our life here. As we eat and enjoy conversation around our table we hope to reflect the hospitality and the love of God. *Lynn*



News of the land

Each winter a major activity for us is hedge laying. It's a traditional way of creating a living barrier to keep animals in and a fantastic habitat for wildlife. The stems of the hedge are cut almost all the way through; they are then bent over horizontally and woven to form a dense hedge. The hedge is then allowed to re-grow for a number of years before being layed again. We lay them roughly every 10 years so there's always some hedge in each stage of growth, from newly layed to mature, therefore there's always very varied habitat for different species of wildlife.

See more from Richard about laying hedges in our Conservation Cloister.

High Stoy Conservation Cluster



“There is increasing recognition of the benefits of working at a landscape scale, connecting sites and habitats to

create a more resilient network”. This is the opening sentence of the just-published report by Footprint Ecology, which sums up the aspirations of the High Stoy Conservation Cluster. The Friary is one of the seven landowners involved. A grant of £3k from the Dorset AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) funded consultants Footprint Ecology to research and report on the Cluster's biodiversity potential. The report suggests management actions in the coming years for Grassland, Water courses, Hedges, Woodlands and Trees, and Heath across the 260 ha Cluster area.

Ali Templeton

Batcombe Down

The recent work on Batcombe Down was a great example of the work of the High Stoy Conservation Cluster. We are fortunate to live next to Batcombe Down SSSI which is the most important site in Dorset for the rare Duke of Burgundy butterfly. This winter, community members, guests, neighbours, Butterfly Conservation and Natural England worked together in rain, wind and hail to clear scrub to create habitat for the Duke. The caterpillars feed on cowslips and primroses and need plants with leaves that stay lush all summer. But parts of the site were becoming too overgrown with blackthorn and bramble. Together we cleared areas allowing the cowslips and their Dukes to thrive. If you visit in May make sure you look out for the Duke. *Richard*



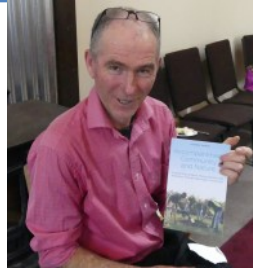
Comings and goings

After Christmas, **Nathan** from the USA, and **Hee** from South Korea left at the end of their year of volunteering. And they are now engaged! We wish them very well for the future.

Debbie is currently in the process of leaving, having volunteered with us for a year. She will move to Sherborne and continue with her caring work.

Eva has just returned after some fascinating travels—first to Estonia, on a training week for volunteers from the Evangelische Kirche in Rheinland; and then to Israel, travelling with a group of friends from Germany.

Kerry (USA) is delighted to have been granted permanent residency in the UK.



On 8th February we celebrated the launch of Jonathan Herbert's book "Accompaniment, Community and Nature"

Out of his experience living at Hilfield and at the Pilsdon community, and from his work with people on the margins, Jonathan explores how the practice of accompaniment might challenge the forces of individualism and 'othering'. Chapter 7 in particular showcases Hilfield. On sale in our bookshop, £16.99

Brother Anselm 1930—2019

In our life at the friary we are blest with many friends who help and encourage us. Many will remember Br Anselm, either as Headmaster of Hooke School or as a member of the Hilfield Advisory Group that met regularly here for many years, as our new style of life was developing. Anselm died on the 30th December last year, aged 89, in the 64th year of his profession, and one of the 'elder statesmen' of our Franciscan family. He was a wise priest, counsellor and friend, sharing something of the power and love of God amongst those with whom he lived. His later years were spent at Glasshampton encouraging the younger brothers in their Franciscan calling. His funeral Eucharist at Areley Kings Church, near to Glasshampton was an occasion of great thanksgiving for a life lived honestly and faithfully in the Lord's service. Please join us in giving thanks for him and praying that he may rest in peace and rise in glory. *Brother Malcolm*

