

Newsletter

Bruton Pitcombe Redlynch Brewham Shepton Montague Wyke Champflower



There is much for us to reflect on as we enter Lent. At the time of writing, the Russian invasion of Ukraine continues and it is very hard to see where it will end and what lasting impact it will make across Europe and beyond. Most of us have become accustomed to living in stable and peaceful communities and it comes as a tremendous shock as we are confronted by such aggression so relatively close to home. Until now, threats to sovereign states have happened only in far away places with little direct impact on our own lives. We must reflect on our solidarity with people of other nations.

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We also contemplate learning to 'live with Covid' and the prospect of having to reassess our attitude to this health risk and its impact on our social behaviour: what is reasonable and considerate behaviour now, and what might still make other people feel uncomfortable? We must work harder at loving our neighbour.

The Church of England is entering a phase of restructuring that could determine its future for the next generation, as plans are discussed to make changes to the central institutions and the number and function of Dioceses and Bishops, as well as difficult decisions regarding the shape and funding of ministry at parish level. We must consider the sort of church God is calling us to be and our role in that church.

Individually, we must reflect on our own discipleship: if we would describe ourselves as Christian, what do we mean by that? In what way do we follow Christ and seek to be more like Christ? How much of ourselves do we give in God's service and what do we hold back and why? How well do we treat God in our everyday life? How well do we know God and allow ourselves to be known by God? Lent is a time to take down our carefully erected defences and allow God to enter our hearts and change us.

Have a profitable Lent.

If you have something to contribute to a future edition of this newsletter, do please send it to the Rector at the benefice office address.

Easy-to-follow details of how to receive this newsletter by email can be found on the St Mary's website, or email benefice@stmarysbruton.org. If you are aware of someone who might like to receive it but does not use email, please consider printing a copy yourself and delivering it to them.

NEWS

Benefice Office volunteers – Marian Kelham, Judy Gallanaugh and Jean Skidmore have decided to step back from the role they have fulfilled for many years providing help in the Benefice Office with the preparation, production and delivery of service leaflets, news sheets, wrestling with badly behaved printers and staplers etc. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude for the many, many hours of work they have put in and the willingness with which they have done so. As you will all know, churches like ours cannot function without the generosity of such volunteers and we are very grateful.

Vacant Benefices in this Deanery – the two benefices of Milborne Port and Six Pilgrims fell vacant a little while ago and two more benefices within our Deanery will fall vacant soon: Camelot and Cam Vale, following retirement and resignation of their incumbents. These vacancies give rise to the opportunity and possibility of schemes being promoted to reorganise benefices across the Deanery in order to achieve the planned reduction in the number of stipendiary clergy, as mentioned in previous Newsletters. No details of any such schemes have yet been announced.

Thank you to the person who has kindly offered to help with the provision of a hot meal for a local family in Bruton.

The Rector has been invited to preach at King's Bruton chapel service on 16th March.

St Mary's has resumed a regular monthly service of All Age Worship (on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 11.00 am) wonderfully supported by the newly formed junior choir. We had fun at the service on 20th February 'hiding the Alleluias', which will remain hidden during Lent, emerging joyfully on Easter Sunday.

BENEFICE SERVICES

When there is a 5th Sunday in the month, we hold a single service in the Benefice. Currently, this takes place at 11.00 am at St Mary's, Bruton, though there is no reason why it could not move around the Benefice. The idea is that on these Sundays, we come together from across our 6 churches and worship, pray and socialise together. The reality is that very few people attend this service who would not generally attend at that time and place – most people seem to take the opportunity to take a Sunday off and not attend church at all. This is sad. If we are to survive as Christian communities (how many of our churches have seen anyone new join them in the last year?), we need the strength and support of one another and this 5th Sunday service is a good chance to offer just that mutual support and encouragement. Please do try to come.



LENT LUNCHES

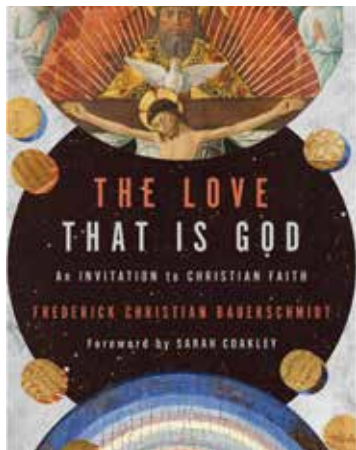


The Lent Lunches will take place at the Community Hall on Wednesdays from 9th March to 13th April at 12.30 pm. We ask for a voluntary donation to support the work of Christian Aid, with a suggested minimum of £5 per person. Please support this venture as a way not only of raising money for Christian Aid, but as a way of strengthening our own community of faith.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

- Coffee mornings are back at the community hall in Bruton on Saturday mornings. These are an excellent opportunity to socialise and meet people from the local community and support local charities at the same time. Please come. Please spread the word.
- Bruton Litter Pick: Mill on the Brue are organising a litter pick in Bruton on Saturday 19th March, meeting at 10.00 am at Legg's Bridge (by the Texaco Garage / Budgens).
- Save the children: we are looking for someone to take on the role of co-ordinating donations to save the children around Bruton (other villages welcome to join this too) – placing and collecting cash boxes and/or publicising online donations or standing orders. Please speak to the Rector if you can help with this.
- Lent Larder: there will be a collection point in St Mary's during Lent for donations to our local food bank - the Brue Larder. We are experiencing increased demand for help with food and this is expected to increase yet further as fuel costs rise.

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP



Cover Art: Meg Schmidt

A reminder that this new group will meet on Monday evenings during Lent at 6.00 pm, starting on Monday 7th March. Jill and Alistair Pearce are kindly hosting the meetings. All are welcome, but please let Jill and Alistair (or the Rector) know if you are planning to come so that we know how many to expect. We will be discussing 'The Love that is God', by Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt, (see Issue 7 of this Newsletter).

BENEFICE ADMINISTRATOR

We have so far received 5 expressions of interest for the post of part-time Benefice Administrator and 2 people have requested the application form. The closing date for applications is 31st March 2022. A detailed role description is available on request from benefice@stmarysbruton.org. Anyone who wishes to have an informal conversation about the role should contact the Rector.

HEARTEDGE WESSEX



HeartEdge

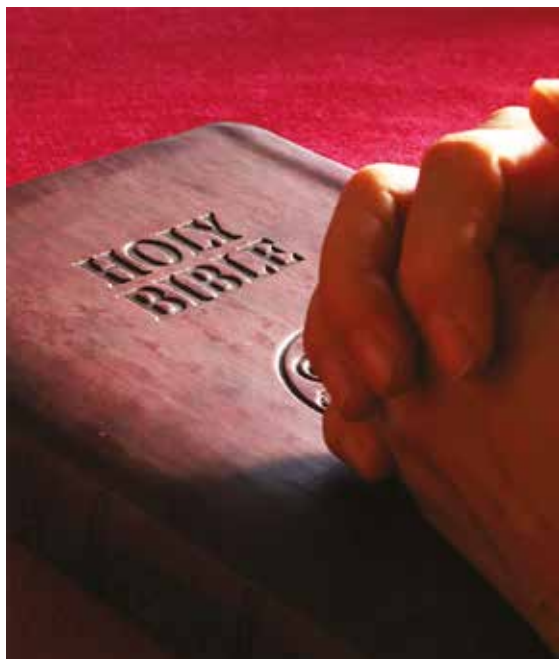
Heartedge is an ecumenical network seeking to help churches thrive and to enable them to escape the narrative of scarcity and instead expand their imagination. In particular, Heartedge embraces the need to raise finance in innovative ways and seeks to do so in ways that are missional.

There is a regional conference scheduled for 17 May in Christchurch, Dorset. This will be an opportunity to hear stories of what has been tried in other churches – things that have worked and things that remain as yet unrealised. This approach could be transformative for us.

More details about Heartedge can be found on their website:

<https://www.heartedge.org/>

HOLY WEEK



Make more time for God this Holy Week. We cannot expect to know God deeply if we do not spend time consciously aware of God's presence. Holy Week is a good opportunity to devote more time to listening in silence for the presence that is there when we put aside the distractions. You might like to use Holy Week to identify what you feel would help you to grow in faith in the year ahead – what is it that you wish to explore in more depth?

This could feed into ideas for future courses across the Benefice. Please look out for details of services during Holy Week which will be advertised soon (on St Mary's website, on St Mary's Facebook page and on posters in our churches).

DIARY DATES

- 2 March: Ash Wednesday Eucharist with imposition of ashes, St Mary's, Bruton, 6.00 pm
- 4 March: Funeral of Gillian Craig, St, Leonard's, 12.00 noon
- 5 March: St Mary's Coffee Morning at Bruton Community Hall, 10.30 am
- 9 March: Lent Lunch at Bruton Community Hall, 12.30 pm
- 11 March: Wyke Champflower Annual Meeting, Wyke Manor, 6.30 pm
- 12 March: Memorial service for Vic Butler at St Mary's, 2.30 pm
- 16 March: Lent Lunch at Bruton Community Hall, 12.30 pm
- 16 March: Bruton PCC meeting, at the Bruton Library, 6.00 pm
- 16 March: Men's Shed consultation meeting, at the Unionist Club, 7.30 pm
- 19 March: Diocesan Synod meeting
- 19 March: Bruton Litter Pick, meet at Legg's Bridge, 10.00 am
- 23 March: Lent Lunch at Bruton Community Hall, 12.30 pm
- 25 March: Pitcombe Annual Meetings, St Leonard's, 6.00 pm
- 30 March: Lent Lunch at Bruton Community Hall, 12.30 pm
- 1 April: Sunny Hill prep school Easter service at St. Leonard's, 9.15 am
- 1 April: BSG Easter service at St Mary's, 10.30 am
- 6 April : Lent Lunch at Bruton Community Hall, 12.30 pm
- 8 April: Wedding at Wyke Champflower, 3.30 pm
- 10 April: Palm Sunday – Holy Week begins

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