

Newsletter

Bruton

Pitcombe

Redlynch

Brewham

Shepton Montague

Wyke Champflower



It is very encouraging to see a series of social and cultural events taking place in our churches over the coming months. These are not only fun and (the most important bit) a good way of serving our local communities, they can also generate much needed income for our churches.

Unlike the free churches and many evangelical churches, so-called 'middle of the road' Church of England parishes are very rarely able to make ends meet without finding sources of substantial additional income – hence the long-established pattern in our parishes of numerous coffee mornings, cake sales, fetes, concerts etc.

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The evangelical wing of the church tends to have a tradition of generous personal giving, often 'tithing' (giving a tenth of one's income). The free churches have had to be self-supporting from the outset, whereas Church of England parishes used to benefit from large endowments and did not need much income from worshippers. How times change.

The Church of England's modest aspiration (set in 1978 and probably never achieved) is that we should each give 5% of income (after tax but before other costs) to fund the work of the church. In our Diocese, the average level of personal giving is well below even this 5% level at around £12.00 per week. This low level of income impacts on our ability to maintain our buildings and fund our ministry.

Unless we who attend church become radically more generous individually, or our congregations grow enormously (or both?), then we need to find new ways of generating income if we are to survive. This funding deficit is coming to a head in our times, and it is up to us to respond if we wish to maintain a visible Christian presence through a church in every parish.

Together, we need to increase substantially our programme of social and cultural events and investigate further ways of generating income. If we do it well, this will not only balance the books but will ensure the ongoing vitality of our church communities. We now need much more than the occasional cake sale.



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 from our Parishes

St John's will be hosting a concert by the guitarist Justin Daish on Friday 21 October at 7.00pm. Tickets are £10, which includes a glass of wine or a soft drink and can be bought at the Old Red Lion or from any member of the PCC.

The Film Night series continues at St Peter's, Shepton Montague, with a screening of 'The Outfit' on Thursday 13 October, refreshments from 6.45pm, film starts at 7.30 pm. Tickets and drinks are available on the door.

On 20 September friends and family bade farewell to long-time Brewham resident Jon Mott. His Funeral was held at St John's, where he had served as Church Warden for twenty five years, retiring aged 88 in 2018. After the service which was taken by Rev Mark Ellis and Rev Jonathan Evans, Jon was buried next to his late wife Annette in the Churchyard that he had looked after for so many years. He will be very much missed.

Harvest Festivals: St John's Harvest Festival and lunch is on 2 October; Holy Trinity, Wyke Champflower's harvest Evensong is on 9 October; St Mary's Harvest Festival and lunch is on 16 October; St Peter's, Redlynch harvest Festival is on 23 October; and St Peter's Shepton Montague and St Leonard's have already held theirs on 25 September.



Harvest Festival

The Rector is attending a Diocesan conference on rural ministry on 3 October.

Coffee and chat continues in Brewham fortnightly on Mondays in the village hall, on 3, 17 and 31 October.

The Friends of St Mary's is still seeking new trustees. Do please think of anyone you know who might be willing to help – it is not very onerous. Please speak to Harry Mills or the Rector if you have suggestions.

Donations to the Brue Larder (our local foodbank) can be left at a new drop box in the Convenience Store on the High Street in Bruton.

Benefice Services

As mentioned in the previous issue of this newsletter, we are changing the pattern of services on the 5th Sunday in the month (when there is one). From this month (30 October), the only service in the Benefice on a 5th Sunday will be a said service of Holy Communion (BCP) at 8.00 am at St Mary's.

This month, since we celebrate the (transferred) Feast of All Saints on that Sunday, we are planning a visit to All Saints, Castle Cary, joining them in their celebration of their Patronal Festival with a Eucharist at 10.00am, followed by refreshments at The George Hotel in Castle Cary. All are welcome to join this trip and if anyone needs transport, please email benefice@stmarysbruton.org and we will arrange this. If any want to walk there, we can arrange a lift home.



Baby Loss Awareness Week

The death of a baby during pregnancy, birth or shortly after birth can be a devastating experience and is often something that is suffered silently and without a chance to acknowledge and grieve the loss of life. Baby Loss Awareness Week seeks to address this.



This year, it runs from 9 – 15 October. We plan to hold a service jointly with our two neighbouring benefices in Castle Cary and Evercreech. The service will be at St Andrew's, Ansford on Weds 12 October at 6.00 pm.

Benefice Discussion Group



The discussion groups will resume on Monday 10 October, meeting weekly at the Rectory in two groups as before – one starting at 6.00pm and the other 7.30pm. This time we will be looking at the Creeds: what they are, what they mean, which bits we find difficult to understand or to say. All are welcome. Please let the Rector know if you intend to come so we have a feel for numbers. If you have a preference for the earlier or later group, please say so and we can then try to balance the numbers in each group.

Proposed Reduction in Stipendiary Clergy

The Diocesan Strategy for balancing the budget includes, as has been mentioned in this newsletter and in sermons, a reduction in the number of stipendiary clergy. A shortfall in income from parishes (the 'Parish Share') means the Diocese cannot continue to meet the cost of clergy, plus associated housing, pension and training cost, at the current rate. On 11 October, the steering committee for Deanery Synod (the 'Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group') will consider proposals for a revised set of principles to determine how a reduced number of clergy might be deployed across this Deanery. These will then be presented to Deanery Synod at its meeting on 10 November.

Installation of Bishop Michael



Bishop Michael Beasley will be installed as the 80th Bishop of Bath & Wells at a special service at Wells Cathedral on Saturday 12 November at 3.00pm.

This service is ticketed (invitation only) but will also be livestreamed.

Diary Dates

- 2 October - Harvest Festival and lunch at Brewham, 11.00 am
- 5 October - 'Sailing around the world', a talk at St Leonard's, Pitcombe, 5.30 pm
- 9 October - Harvest Festival Evensong, Holy Trinity, Wyke Champflower, 6.30 pm
- 10 October - Benefice Discussion Group resumes (weekly), The Rectory 6.00pm and 7.30 pm

- 11 October - meeting of the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group
- 14 October - Memorial Service (Becca Goulding), St Mary's, 2.00pm
- 16 October - Harvest Festival and lunch at Bruton, 11.00 am
- 21 October - Justin Daish concert at St John's, 7.00 pm
- 23 October - Harvest Festival at Redlynch, 11.00 am
- 29 October - Memorial Service and interment (Sylvia Thorne) at St Leonard's, 3.00 pm
- 30 October - Benefice trip to All Saints, Castle Cary (for 10.00am Eucharist)

Further ahead...

- 2 November - All Souls Service at St Mary's, 6.30 pm
- 4 November - Pitcombe PCC at Grove Farm, 2.30pm
- 6 November - Baptism at St John's, 9.30 am
- 6 November - St Leonard's Patronal Festal Evensong, 6.00 pm
- 8 November - wedding at St Mary's, 11.00 am
- 10 November - meeting of the Deanery Synod
- 10 November - chamber music concert at St Leonard's, Pitcombe at 3.00 pm



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