



Bruton Pitcombe Redlynch Brewham Shepton Montague Wyke Champflower



*So do not fear, for I am with you;  
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you and help you;  
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*  
(Isaiah 41:10, NIV)

The Church of England has produced some Lent resources called 'Dust and Glory'. (You can get these for free from the CofE website).

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The resources are based on Emma Ineson's book 'Failure' mentioned below.

The notes for one day focus on attitudes to failure. The reader is given a task: to find quotes that relate to set-backs and how we deal with them. Here are some for you to consider: how do you respond to them? Do you like them or loathe them, and why? Can you find others that resonate with you? Can you add some of your own?

You may (or may not) have heard and remember a sermon in which the Rector reported the view that has been expressed that our churches are currently failing – we are currently not fully meeting the cost of our stipendiary clergy. Failure is also in the air when census results are scrutinised. What do you think about failure, and how do we deal with it?

*'Our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change'* – Martin Luther King Jr.

*'It is better to make a thousand failures than to be too cowardly to ever undertake anything'* - Clovis G. Chappell (Author and minister in the 1900s).

*'Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal'* – Henry Ford.

*'Our greatest fear should not be of failure but of succeeding at things in life that don't really matter'* - Francis Chan (American pastor and author) .

*'Being challenged in life is inevitable, being defeated is optional'* – Roger Crawford (tennis player and motivational speaker).

*'The church that is man-managed instead of God-governed is doomed to failure. A ministry that is college-trained but not Spirit-filled works no miracles'* - Samuel Chadwick (Wesleyan Methodist Minister 1900s).

*'Obstacles don't have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it'* – Michael Jordan (former professional basketball player) .

*'Christ did not die simply that you might be saved from a bad conscience, or even to remove the stain of past failure, but to "clear the decks" for divine action'* - Major Ian Thomas (W.Ian Thomas, English evangelist, took part in the evacuation at Dunkirk).

*'Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly'* – Robert F. Kennedy.

*'When people fail, we are inclined to find fault with them, but if you look more closely, you will find that God had some particular truth for them to learn, which the trouble they are in is to teach them'* - G.V. Wigram (English biblical scholar and theologian, 1800s).

*'It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer'* – Albert Einstein.

*'One who faces his own failures is steadily advancing on the pilgrim's way'* - William Temple.



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](mailto: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.

## *Benefice Re-organisation*

Deanery Synod will meet on 21 March to consider proposals for the re-organisation of the Benefices in this Deanery. It is expected that a number of proposals will be tabled for discussion and comment and the details of those proposals will be circulated to representatives of Deanery Synod before that meeting. Deanery Synod Representatives will then be able to consult their PCCs and wider congregations about the proposals, so that they can carry those views to Synod.

Several of our parishes have no Deanery Synod Representative. In those parishes, Churchwardens should contact the Area Dean and ask to be included when the proposals are circulated.

None of the proposals will make for easy reading, as they all involve a reduction in the number of Benefices from 8.5 (plus 2 House for Duty posts) to 7, consequent on the reduction in the number of stipendiary clergy required as a result of falling contributions to the Common Fund (i.e. payments of Parish Share), out of which the cost of providing stipendiary clergy are met. In this Benefice, we are paying Parish Share in full, but that is not the case everywhere. Because the contributions are paid into a common fund, and the costs of ministry for the whole Diocese are borne by that fund, the shortfall in the fund affects ministry across the entire Diocese.

As the Rector has been prompting over recent months, we will all have to consider carefully and prayerfully how to respond to these changes, once their likely shape emerges. However the re-organisation is done, it will involve fewer clergy covering the same area. When our Benefice is enlarged, in whatever way that might be, it seems that the Rector will be expected to provide the same level of care for the people of the additional parishes as he is supposed to be providing at present within the existing Benefice.

The task facing us is how to make that not only feasible, but fruitful.

## *News from our Parishes*

There will be the customary big Spring Clean at St Mary's, Bruton on Saturday 1 March, reaching those hard to access parts of the church and getting ready for Holy Week and Easter. Please contact Harry Mills for details of how you can help in what is a good social occasion as well as a good job.

## *Prayers and Blessings: same-sex relationships*

At its meeting in February, General Synod welcomed proposals from the House of Bishops to introduce some approved prayers for use in church to celebrate and bless same-sex relationships, including civil partnerships and civil marriages. The House of Bishops did not put forward any proposals to change church law or doctrine as regards marriage, so the position remains that it is not permissible for a same-sex couple to marry in church. It is important to note that these new prayers are not yet finalised and therefore not yet available to be used. It is likely that, if and when they are finalised and released for use, the decision whether or not to use them will be a matter for the Incumbent of each parish to decide, following consultation with churchwardens, PCCs and any other licensed ministers.

## *Bruton Choral Society Concert*

On Sunday 5 March, BCS will be performing Fauré's Requiem and a programme of other French music, under guest conductor Arturo Serna, with soloists Mair Mills and Geoff Allan. It promises to be a wonderful evening of music. Tickets (£10 in advance or £12 on the door) are available from Bruton Convenience Store or online at [www.brutonchoralsociety.org](http://www.brutonchoralsociety.org) or by phoning 01749 813161. The concert starts at 7.00pm.

## *The Common Cup (revisited)*

The previous issue of this Newsletter contained an article explaining the current position regarding the administration of communion and the practice of communicants receiving from a single chalice. Regular communicants were invited to reflect, consider their position on this issue and let either the Rector or a churchwarden know, so that the Rector can decide (with PCCs) what our practice should be in each parish.

Only 4 responses were received. This suggests that: the issue is not important to people, or people are reluctant to express their views, or perhaps that very few people read the Newsletter!

The question whether to reintroduce the common cup remains under review, but no change will be made at the moment – we will continue the practice of intinction by the priest.

## *Friends of St Mary's*

The Friends of St Mary the Virgin Bruton ("Friends"), a registered charity, came into being on 5 March 2001. It was established primarily to fund refurbishment of the Church Bells. It has approximately 30 current members who pay an annual fee to remain as a Friend and some make an additional donation. There are 6 committee members (three of whom are not active) plus the Rector. There have been some efforts in the past to raise awareness of the Friends within Bruton by posting fliers and providing leaflets in the church but with limited success.

In Simon Jenkins' seminal work on England's thousand best churches, St Mary's Bruton is given high praise, calling its tower "Somerset architecture at its most powerful". The Friends is all about preserving and enhancing the fabric of this magnificent building. You do not have to be a churchgoer or even a believer to be a Friend or to serve on the Committee. We want everyone regardless of faith to enjoy this wonderful asset Bruton is fortunate to have.

St Mary's Bruton is about to begin a major fund-raising period and the Friends will have a key role to play in such fundraising, wearing its charitable hat.

We are delighted that David Stevens has offered to act as Chairman of the Friends (subject to being duly appointed) and this is a great start to giving the Friends a much-needed new lease of life.

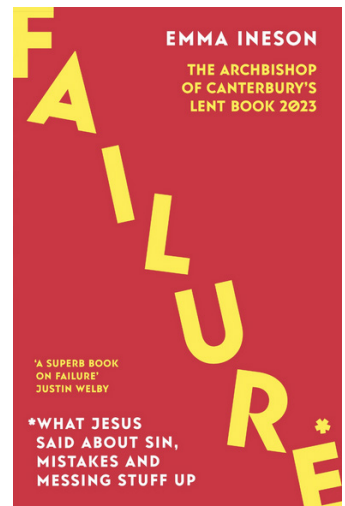
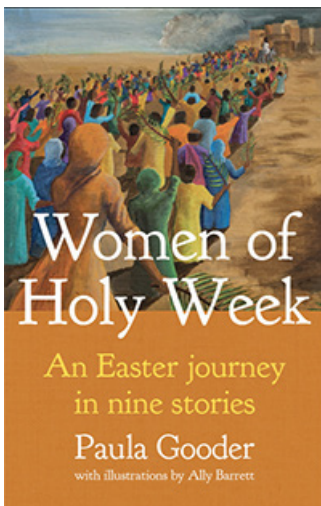
We need more Friends of all ages and of any faith or no faith to join either as an ordinary Friend or additionally to serve on the Committee or to become a trustee. If you would like to become a Friend or to learn more about the Friends please contact David Stevens via the Benefice Office by phone (01749 813080) or email ([benefice@stmarysbruton.org](mailto:benefice@stmarysbruton.org)).

## Lent Reading Suggestions

'Jesus was like that, I'd found over the years: he would let you grow into the truth that he brought in your own time.' Read about the women present with Jesus during his ministry and in the event of Holy Week. A collection of 9 stories about the women whose stories are only hinted at in the Gospels. **'Women of Holy Week', by Paula Gooder.**

**'The Falling of Dusk', by Paul Dominiak.** An extended meditation on Jesus' seven last words on the Cross. Dominiak engages with some of the great doubters of Christianity, showing how we should embrace and learn from doubt.

**'Failure', by Emma Ineson.** This engaging book looks at what failure is, how it relates to the concept of sin and how to live well with the mess of ordinary life. What did Jesus say about failure?





If you prefer video to the written word, then why not try these Lent videos produced by the Sanctuary Foundation, each of which focuses on a basic human emotion: happiness, anger, sadness, fear, disgust and surprise. You can access the videos via Sanctuary Foundation's website: <https://www.sanctuaryfoundation.org.uk/> or you can sign up (via the website) for direct delivery to your email account.

## *Lent Course*

During Lent, we will study Rowan Williams' short book 'Meeting God in Mark', which has suggested readings from Mark's Gospel for each week of Lent and notes for 3 group discussions. It is readily available second hand from online bookshops.

The group will meet at the Rectory, fortnightly on Mondays at 3.00 pm or 6.30 pm. The first session will be on Monday 27 February. All are welcome to join.

## *Lent Lunches*

Due to lack of volunteers to organise and run them, the Lent Lunches will not take place. The hope had been to use donations from the lunches to support Brue Larder at a difficult time - donations of food have dropped away considerably, meaning that the larder is having to buy food to distribute. If you are able to make a donation in lieu of the cost of the Lent Lunch, please place your donation in the donations point in St Mary's, or send it to the Benefice Office (c/o the Rectory), marked 'Brue Larder'.

## *Diary Dates*

- 1 March - Spring Clean at St. Mary's - all day
- 5 March - Bruton Choral Society concert, St Mary's at 7.00 pm
- 9 March - Shepton Montague Film Night: '**Emily**', St Peter's at 7.30 pm
- 14 March - Wyke Champflower annual meeting, Wyke Manor at 6.30 pm
- 15 March - Bruton PCC meeting, Plox meeting room at 5.30 pm
- 18 March - Diocesan Synod
- 21 March - Deanery Synod, venue tbc, 7.00 pm

## *Contact*

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