



Bruton Pitcombe Redlynch Brewham Shepton Montague Wyke Champflower Bratton Seymour



Blossom & Sheep near Cogley Wood

How is your Lent going? Did you come to the Ash Wednesday service? Have you read the challenging book by Liz Dodd mentioned in the last newsletter or another Lent book? One of the topics we have discussed in our Lent Group is spiritual nourishment – what it is and how we do it.

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This lies at the heart of Lent, as we intentionally make space and time to ask questions of ourselves about our relationship with God and try to discern what we need to do to allow ourselves to be drawn closer. There is huge pressure from all around us just to carry on with the usual busyness and noise of life, ignoring God's invitation, not stopping to pray. Lent asks us to resist that pressure for a while and to see what might happen. Lent is a season to take our faith more seriously and to give it some of our attention and time. Who knows what fruit it might bring if we were to do this?



If you have something to contribute to a future edition of this newsletter, 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 (www.stmarysbruton.org), 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

We held a meeting on 31 January to discuss the future shape of ministry in our benefice. The purpose, as explained in previous newsletters, was to consider together the Diocesan strategy of encouraging more members of our congregations to take on aspects of ministry that have until now been left to the clergy, such as leading worship, preaching, pastoral care, PCC governance etc. Sadly, very few people attended, and no-one at all from 4 of our 7 churches. Perhaps that fact tells its own story? If members of our congregations are not going to share in the ministry, what are we going to do instead?

Friends of St Mary's staged a wonderful Spiral of Light with fire dancers, food, drink and of course the flares sponsored in memory of departed loved ones. The Dovecot looked wonderful with all the flares lit and lots of people came. We are very grateful to the Rawlingson Plant family in particular for their organisation and hard work. Over £3,000 was raised for the Friends of St Mary's, which is a great achievement.

As we approach the time for our Annual Meetings, please do consider whether there are people who might be encouraged to stand for election to our PCCs. Bruton PCC is currently without a secretary and it would be good to fill that role if we can.

Redlynch Chapel

If you have a care or concern for St Peter's, Redlynch, then please come along to a meeting on Saturday 18 April. This will be an open meeting for anyone interested in the future of the chapel. The purpose of the meeting is to try to work out together whether the chapel has a future and if so what that might be. The context is that, on current forecasts, the chapel will run out of money early in 2027 such that it will not be able to pay its insurance premium or electricity standing charges and will therefore have to close and probably be sold. That would be a sad loss to the community.

As readers of this newsletter hopefully know, every Church of England parish has to be financially self-sufficient: we do not receive any financial support from the state nor from the central Church of England. Every local church has to pay its own way. St Peter's has no regular income at all. And it does have unavoidable running costs. Its funds will run out in early 2027. So this is decision time: is there a viable rescue plan or will we have to close? If this is something that you care about, please come and be part of the discussion.

The meeting will be held at St Peter's Chapel, Sat 18 April, 10.30am.



Deanery Quiet Day

Just before Holy Week there is an opportunity for some quiet and reflection together with people from across our Deanery. On Saturday 28 March, a group of us will go to Hilfield Friary for a day of seclusion and reflection. Email robsage@uwclub.net or phone 01749 850934 to book.

Bruton & Cary Deanery



Preparing for Holy Week - *facing Jerusalem*

led by one of the brothers from Hilfield Friary

Saturday March 28th 2026

10.00am to 4.00pm

***A Quiet Day sharing
'Franciscan Spirituality'
at Hilfield Friary.***

*The day will be interspersed
with a couple of short talks
from one of the brothers
and then time to reflect
in the grounds or chapel.*

*Coming together to join the
community for Midday Eucharist
and sharing lunch together.*



Cost £20

Bring your own lunch - tea and coffee provided.

Limited to 30 places.

Contact the Lay Dean, Rob Sage, to book.

robsage@uwclub.net or 01749 850934

Candles for Ukraine

“In January 2023 we announced a tentative plan to collect candles to send to those struggling without heat and power in Ukraine. The media got behind the initiative and now thousands of candles, some new, some partly used are sent to us in Swindon from all over the country.

At our warehouse we transform your old candles into trench candles to provide a heat source for cold Ukrainians where winter temperatures dip to an alarming minus 30 C, as well as creating large blocks of wax from candle ends that we send to volunteers in Ukraine who turn them into huge numbers of candles for the local population.” *From the SHAP website*

The infrastructure in Ukraine is under immense pressure. Huge areas of the country are regularly without electricity. Just imagine trying to survive in freezing temperatures - perhaps with young children or older family members – with limited heat and light. This is the reality in much of Ukraine and **we can all help to make a difference.**



Donation boxes for new and used candles can be found in the Church.

Thank you for your support

Deanery Synod

There will be an open meeting of Deanery Synod on 18 March at 7pm in North Barrow village hall. This is an opportunity to ask questions about Diocesan finance. Members of the Finance Team will be there. We hear a lot of talk (and not a few criticisms and complaints) about the finances of the Church of England and our own Diocese. This is an opportunity to get some explanations, some clarifications and some answers (we hope). If you do have questions or representations that you would like to put to the Finance Team, please either come to the meeting or brief your Deanery Synod representative.

How to give up a grievance



Barbara J Hunt is a forgiveness specialist and advocate, speaker, workshop leader, global peace visionary, award-winning and bestselling author of *Forgiveness Made Easy - the revolutionary guide to moving beyond your past and truly letting go*.

She has over 30 years' experience in personal and spiritual development as a mentor, coach, and group facilitator.

Forgiveness is something most of us struggle with. It can feel confusing, impossible, and often deeply unfair, but it's also arguably the most powerful way to release the emotional burdens we carry. This introductory talk offers a fresh, practical look at what forgiveness really is, what it isn't, and how it can make a genuine difference to your mental and emotional health.

Refreshments served before the talk.

Tickets £10 from liveatstmarys.sumupstore.com

Thursday 26 March, 7–8.30pm

Bible Course

The Bible is a fascinating and important collection of books. But it is not an easy read, and it has sometimes been misunderstood and misused. Some people are confident about their reading of the Bible, and others are far from confident, and find it confusing or contradictory or irrelevant or all these things.

We are planning a course in which we explore an overview of the Bible and seek to understand how the diverse books it contains fit together, to explore how to read it and receive the meaning and truth it contains? So far only three people have expressed an interest in attending this course. It needs a few more in order to be viable, so if you would like to be part of this, please get in touch before Easter.



Palm Sunday

This year, Palm Sunday falls on the 5th Sunday of the month, when the normal pattern of services is not followed. So it is an ideal opportunity for us to come together to worship as a Benefice. There will be an 11am Eucharist at St Mary's with the blessing and procession of palms. Do come if you can.

World Day of Prayer

I Will Give You Rest: Come

(Matthew 11:28-30)

Nigeria 2026, March 6, 2pm, St Luke's & St Teresa's, Wincanton

The 2026 World Day of Prayer materials from Nigeria bring us a powerful invitation drawn from Matthew at a time when people worldwide are carrying heavy burdens, our Nigerian sisters offer profound insights into finding rest in God.

Through their exploration of different kinds of burdens - shame, systemic oppression, religious persecution, poverty and despair - the writers help us understand both the weight of human suffering and the depths of divine rest. Their work shows us that true rest isn't just about physical relief, but about transformation through God's grace and community support.



'Rest for the Weary' by Gift Amarachi Ottah

Caring for God's Acre

Hairy-footed Flower Bee

March can be a cold month and not one we associate with insects, the majority of which will emerge a little later in the year. Bumblebees are amongst the first to appear as their hairy bodies give them some insulation against the changeable weather of March; but have a look for another bee, which looks at first glance like a small bumblebee, but which is actually the delightfully named Hairy-footed Flower Bee. The males emerge first and can be found from late February onwards. The male is a rusty brown with a yellow face and long hairs on the middle pair of its six legs. It is these long hairs that give the bee the name of 'hairy footed'. About two weeks later the females emerge, looking completely different. Females are mainly black with orange hairs on their back pair of legs which act like little brushes, collecting pollen as they visit flowers. Hairy-footed flower bees have a long tongue which they use to probe into flask-shaped spring flowers such as primrose and lungwort (or pulmonaria). It is worth checking primroses and lungworts for this little bee, they have a faster, more zippy flight than a bumblebee and also a shrill buzz.



As spring progresses, have a look at the walls of your church or churchyard if they are lime mortared or cobb. The female will nest within the mortar of an old wall, making a small hole in which to

lay eggs. These are 'solitary' bees, so they do not nest in a colony like honey bees and bumblebees.

Hairy-footed flower bees are a good example of the need to provide a range of flowers for pollinators, including both spring and autumn blooms.

This bee is active until June and relies on early pollen to give them energy for their brief breeding season. Most churchyards contain primroses and perhaps you can include lungwort and comfrey in flower beds or planters as well. Please let us know if you see a hairy-footed flower bee, for those who love a phone or computer app, take a look at iNaturalist (uk.inaturalist.org) to confirm your identification and make a record of your spot.



Male Hairy footed flower bee – spot the long hairs!

Bruton School for Girls

PITCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING

The Future of Bruton School for Girls

Pitcombe Parish Council invites all local residents to attend a public meeting to discuss the future of Bruton School for Girls.

Date: Saturday 14th March **Time:** 2pm **Venue:** Hadspen Village Hall

This is an opportunity for residents to hear information, share views and ideas, and take part in an open discussion about the future of this important local site.

All are welcome to attend.

BrueCrew: Blessing the River Brue

'River Blessings' are celebrated by river-lovers of all spiritual paths and none, have been springing-up, growing, and connecting across southwest catchments, especially since Robert MacNaughton, then Mayor of Calne, Wiltshire, invited his friend Kate Dineen, and his local Bishop, Andrew of Ramsbury, to bless the River Marden at spring equinox in 2023. Since then, Kate and Robert's circle of blessings have rotated around the eight cardinal points of the the Celtic wheel of the year – encompassing both the Hampshire and Bristol Avons, as well as the Brue and Severn catchments. BrueCREW has hosted two, beside the stepping stones, at midsummers 2024 and 2025.

Kate and Robert will be joining us in Bruton on the evening of

Wednesday 18 March to talk about their learnings from three years of river blessings around our region.

These shared blessings are part of a growing reconnection with rivers and nature; one positive outcome of the COVID pandemic post 2020, when many people discovered how polluted rivers had become after themselves becoming ill swimming 'wild' in them. The ceremonies present an opportunity for people to come together to share their love for, and concern about, the state of our rivers.

Join us 7 for 7:30pm in the Clubroom, downstairs At the Chapel, on the 18 March, and bring along your informed questions for Kate and Robert. To pre-book a ticket please visit www.eventbrite.co.uk.



Bell Sunday

17th May is 'Bell Sunday'. It is the closest Sunday to St. Dunstan's Day, the Patron Saint of Bellringers.

To mark the event this year, the Cary Branch Change Ringers are organising 'The Great Cary Branch Ring'. Cary Branch is our sub-division of the Bath & Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers (bath-wells.org).

Given that many churches in the Branch/Deanery no longer have weekly services and that many towers no longer have ringers, it has been quite some time since all the bells in the branch have rung on the same Sunday. So, 'The Great Cary Branch Ring' is an attempt to ring the bells in all 44 towers/churches that are part of the Association and celebrate our communities.

We are dividing the branch into eight geographical areas. For each area, we're trying to muster a team of at least six 'roving ringers' who will cover the towers. For the Bruton Group we are likely to cover Bruton, Shepton Montague, Pitcombe, Castle Cary, Ansford, and Yarlinton.

Our Bruton team has also discussed making a day of it so that we can also cover the additional chiming towers in the Bruton Benefice: Wyke Champflower, Redlynch, Brewham, and Bratton Seymour.



Holy Week

In the past few years, a time of prayerfulness and contemplation has been arranged each evening of Holy Week, including art, music and texts for people to respond to, focussing on Christ's Passion. We have also held a short service of Compline (night prayer). It appears that this is not what people want or find useful, as very few people have participated. This year, there will therefore not be anything provided, save for a Eucharist and Watch on Maundy Thursday. If you have thoughts and suggestions about what sort of thing might be helpful during Holy Week in future years, please do get in touch.

Lent Group

We will hold a series of discussion group meetings in Lent. As usual, these will be on Mondays, with one group meeting at 3.00pm and (if there is sufficient demand) another group meeting at 6.30pm. The groups will meet at Marksданes, by kind invitation from Katie Mills. The first meeting will be on the first Monday of Lent, 23 February and the final session will be on 23 March. The material for these discussions is Paula Gooder's book *Lent Wise*.



Prayer Ministry

A Prayer base on Nehemiah's plea

O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenants and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments; let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer of your servants who now pray before you day and night for your people. We have sinned against you. We have offended you deeply, and failed to keep your commandments. We pray for your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great power and your strong hand. O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name.

March- a prayer for lent

With the eyes of faith, we seek the blessings that can bring light to our moments of darkness and despair. With the eyes of faith, we can see the effect that the light of faith can have on our family and friends. With the eyes of faith, we can risk going beyond our comfort zone to reach out and experience chaos in the lives of others which God's love can transform.

Wednesday Prayer Meeting

There is a prayer meeting every Wednesday morning in St Mary's where some of us meet to pray for our community. Anyone is welcome to join us. If you have any requests for prayer, please send them to the Rector and he will let us know.

FOR EVENTS AT ST MARY'S



**Join our
mailing
list
here**



Bruton Choral Society

Quiz Night

Friday 6 March 7.30pm
Bruton Community Hall



Tickets £10 to include a light buffet supper
from 01749 813161

Groups, singles, pairs, all welcome!

maythorne

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, BRUTON



SAT 7TH MARCH 7.30PM

£15

ADV / OTD

A flowing folk fantasia of Celtic and original tunes. Violin, flute, mandolin, bouzouki, guitar and bass weave unexpected changes and tight rhythms in virtuosic explorations of music old and new.



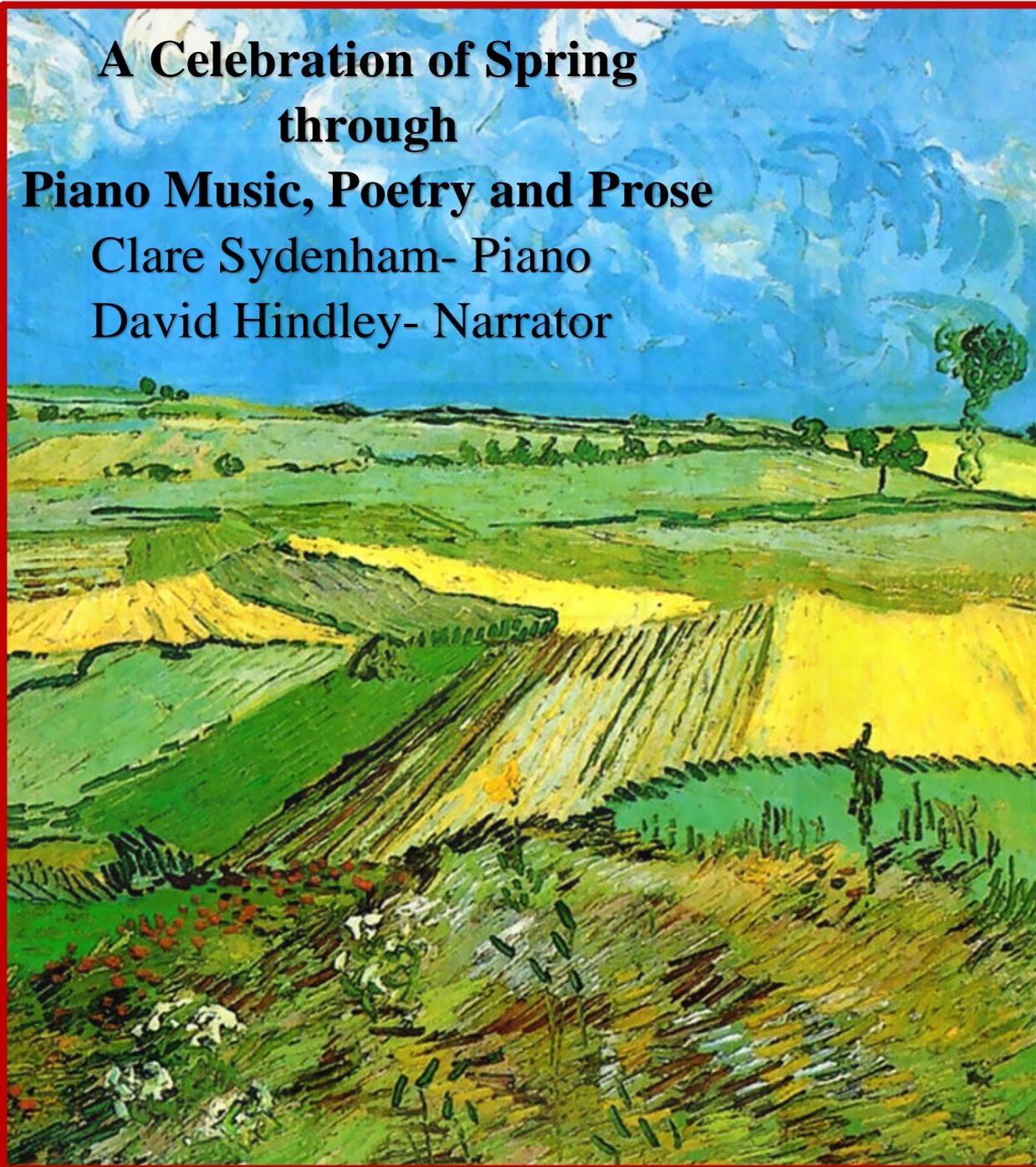
See maythorne.org for photos, videos, etc.

'O'er the Green Cornfields'

**A Celebration of Spring
through
Piano Music, Poetry and Prose**

Clare Sydenham- Piano

David Hindley- Narrator



Sunday March 8th 2026 3pm



St. Mary's Church, Bruton BA10 0EB

Advance Tickets £12 online (no booking fee), on door £14/under 18 free

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/clare-sydenham/t-njonljm> or clare.sydpiano@gmail.com

SHEPTON MONTAGUE PCC

in association with

SOMERSET MOVIOLA

proudly presents



2025/99 minutes/12A

in St Peter's Church, Shepton Montague

Thursday 12th March at 7.30pm

Doors open 7.00pm for drinks & snacks

Tickets: £7.00 (£3.50 for under 15)

pay on the door with card

or at the bar with cash

All proceeds go to St Peter's Church

For more information please contact Sarah Maude 01749 812 149

Visit our website at: www.moviola.org



**VILLAGE QUIZ NIGHT
&
CURRY SUPPER**

**at the
MONTAGUE INN**

Thursday 19th March 2026, 7.00pm

Tickets £25 per person to include supper
In aid of St Peter's Church Shepton Montague

Teams of 6

To book a table please contact:

Robert Mitchell robertmitchell1537@gmail.com

or

Susie Dowding
susie@lowerfarm.org.uk

Vivaldi Gloria



Joint Choral Concert

*

Bruton Choral Society
King's Bruton Chapel Choir
St Mary's Church Choir
Stringendo Ensemble

*

Conductor: Ashley Marshfield

*

St Mary's Bruton, Sunday 22 March 5pm

£10 (18 and under free)
Bruton Convenience Store
01749 813161 or
www.brutonchoralsociety.org.uk
Proceeds to St Mary's Bruton



Bruton Choral Society writes...

The main event in our Spring calendar is a performance of Vivaldi's much loved Gloria on Sunday 22 March in St Mary's Church, Bruton, 5pm.

This will be a joint collaboration between Bruton Choral Society, St Mary's Church Choir, and King's School (Bruton) Chapel Choir, led by King's Director of Music, Ashley Marshfield.

Over 100 singers will be accompanied by the Stringendo Ensemble, with David Bertie (trumpet) and Oliver Higgs (oboe). This promises to be an uplifting occasion, not to be missed!

Tickets are £10 (18 and under free) from:

- Bruton Convenience Store, 01749 813161
- www.brutonchoralsociety.org.uk
- www.stmarysbruton.org

All proceeds are going to St Mary's Church.

We very much look forward to seeing you at this event!

If you'd like to learn more about our activities, take a look at our website or follow us on Instagram or Facebook.

Benefice Services: March

Season Lent (Purple)	Sunday 1 March Lent 2	Sunday 8 March Lent 3	Sunday 15 March Mothering Sunday (Lent 4, Laetare)
St John the Baptist, Brewham	9.30am Eucharist (CW)		9.30am Mothering Sunday Service
St Mary's, Bruton	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 11am Sung Eucharist	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 11am Eucharist (CW1)	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 11am Mothering Sunday Service
St Leonard's, Pitcombe	11am Holy Communion (BCP)	9.30am Matins (BCP)	11am Holy Communion (BCP)
St Peter's, Redlynch			
St Peter's, Shepton Montague		6pm Evening Prayer (CW)	
Holy Trinity, Wyke			
St Nicholas, Bratton Seymour			9.30am Mothering Sunday Service

Benefice Services: March

Season (Various)	Sunday 22 March Lent 5	Sunday 29 March Palm Sunday
St John the Baptist, Brewham		
St Mary's, Bruton	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 9am Breakfast Service 11am Eucharist (CW1)	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 11am Palm Sunday Service
St Leonard's, Pitcombe	4pm Evensong (BCP)	
St Peter's, Redlynch		
St Peter's, Shepton Montague	9.30am Eucharist (CW1)	
Holy Trinity, Wyke		
St Nicholas, Bratton Seymour		

Aurin Girls' Choir (Hungary)

We are very excited to be welcoming back the amazing Aurin Girls' Choir for a concert on Monday 29 June, 7.30pm at St Mary's Church, Bruton. From the Kodály Music School in Kecskemét, these girls and the younger Miraculum Children's Choir have visited Bruton many times in the past and delighted us with their performances. More details will be available in the next bulletin. If anyone might be able to help with hosting the girls or staff please email Barbara as soon as possible:

bjenkinson708@btinternet.com



Kimberley Snapshot

The picture below is of the Bungle Bungles, which are in the East Kimberley not far from Kununurra. When he visited the East Kimberley in March 1979, the first words the Prince of Wales (now King Charles) said upon exiting the plane were 'Dear God is it always this Hot!', and it was a mild 38C – that's a normal day. There had been much talk in the town as to how to entertain the Prince, and the



main idea was to 'take him to the ski beach, have a BBQ and beer, and then he can cool off in Lake Kununurra by waterskiing'. Of course he would have had to dodge the crocodiles that we all knew were in residence, so that was not regarded as a *good* idea! I don't know why though – the locals did it all the time! So they settled for a walk at the local High School's undercroft (at least that was in the shade and surrounded by huge poinciana trees). All the school children lined up in their school cohorts, and were so excited that they were

going to see a prince. I think they expected him to be in royal robes and wearing a crown on his head so they were disappointed by his beige safari suit. His Aide-de-camp was much more interesting as he was in his uniform with all the gold braid. My youngest son was with his friend Richard and the children from St Joseph's Catholic School, and they stood out as they has a different complexion to the rest of their school friends and the Prince went immediately to them to shake their hands. For months afterwards they followed Prince Charles, including watching the whole of the wedding in St Paul's in July 1981.

Diary Dates

March

- 6 • **Memorial:** Julia Clothier, St Mary's, 2pm
- 6 • **EVENT:** Bruton Choral Society Quiz Night, Bruton Community Hall, 7.30pm
- 7 • **EVENT:** Maythorne, St Mary's, 7.30pm
- 8 • **RECITAL:** *O'er the Green Cornfields*, St Mary's, 3pm
- 15 • Mothering Sunday
- 16 • Lent Group, Marksdaner, 3pm
- 19 • **EVENT:** Shepton Montague Quiz Night, Montague Inn, 7pm
- 21 • **EVENT:** Pitcombe Barn Dance, Pitcombe Village Hall, 7pm
- 22 • **EVENT:** Joint Choral Concert Vivaldi *Gloria*, St Mary's, 5pm
- 23 • Brewham PCC, Colinshayes, 7pm
- 26 • **TALK:** Forgiveness Made Easy, St Mary's, 7pm
- 28 • Pitcombe Churchyard Clean-up, St Leonard's, 10am

April

- 2 • Maundy Thursday Eucharist, St Mary's, 6pm
- 3 • Good Friday, an Hour at the Foot of the Cross, St Mary's, 2pm
- 4 • Easter Sunday, Service of Light, St Mary's, 6am
- 10 • Pitcombe APCM, 6pm
- 14 • Shepton Montague APCM, Village Hall, 6pm

Contact

Rev'd Jonathan Evans, Rector

2 Plox Green, Bruton, BA10 0EY

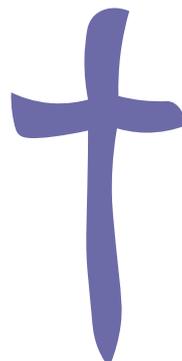
Tel: 01749 812775

email: rector@stmarysbruton.org

Benefice Office

Tel: 01749 813080

email: benefice@stmarysbruton.org





www.stmarysbruton.org