

Bruton Pitcombe Redlynch Brewham Shepton Montague Wyke Champflower Bratton Seymour



October 2026

Two academics have recently published a report urging the Church of England to consider a substantial national reorganisation of the structure of the Church of England by reducing

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the number of Dioceses. One author is an economist and the other is a theologian. They are concerned that the Church of England is heading for financial catastrophe if nothing is done to slim down the centralised functions. So they suggest reducing the number of Dioceses by half a dozen or so to save some of that cost.

It seems unlikely that saving the cost of a few bishops and their staff will by itself be sufficient to put our national finances on a stable footing. Possibly the greatest impact of these changes, if they were ever to be implemented, would be the message they would send about devoting less resource to centralised functions.

An interesting aspect of this report is a further recommendation that responsibility for decision making about the deployment of parish clergy should move from the Diocese to the Deanery. Their thinking is that it would be better for decisions about what stipendiary posts are most needed and how to apply the limited available resource should be taken by those closest to the delivery of that ministry. Deaneries, they argue, should decide which posts to axe and which to retain, whether and where to create interim or part-time posts.

Do you suppose that would be a good change to make? Do you think that our Deanery Synod is the right body to take decisions about the use of resources and the deployment of clergy? Would members of Deanery Synod be the best people for this job, can they be relied on to think strategically and in the interests of the whole Church rather than their own parishes? At present, it is fair to say there does not seem to be a great deal of interest in Deanery Synod. Meetings are generally

poorly attended and, as a benefice, we do not even take up our full allocation of places.

Decision making being done at local level sounds attractive, but is it realistic to think that local people will be willing to shoulder the task of determining clergy numbers and deployment?

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

St Mary's

St Mary's will be hosting a drama performance (a reading of *A Visit from St Nicholas* or *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*). We will also be hosting some interesting stalls as part of Late Night Shopping on 3 December. Mulled wine will be available!

St Leonard's

St Leonard's hosted the annual meeting of the Cary branch of bellringers on 31 October. The ringers rang, had a service of

evening prayer and then their AGM. We are very fortunate to have teams of bellringers in our towers so it was good to be able to host them for this event.

St Leonard's will welcome the Bishop of Taunton to preach at the Patronal Festival on All Saints Day, 1 November, at a service of Choral Evensong with the choir from St Mary's. We look forward to the chance to meet and chat with Bishop Fiona after the service.

St Nicholas'

A public meeting was held at St Nicholas on 23 October to discuss the future of the church and to try to assess what level of support there is for the church in the village. The attendance and the discussion were encouraging with some new people offering to form a group to explore some possible ideas for both activity and fundraising.

St John's

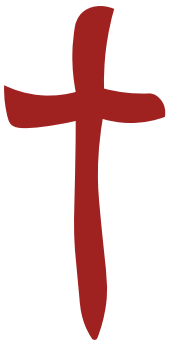
The quiz night to raise funds for St John Baptist is happening soon (4 November). Last year this was a very successful evening and it would be great if we could repeat that this year. All are welcome.

St Peter's, Redlynch

St Peter's, Redlynch, is planning some more events in December to help raise funds to keep the chapel open. We hope to have a Christmas Fair on 5 December, organised by Redlynch Community Patch, and an art exhibition in mid-December (details tbc).

Confirmation Service at Wells Cathedral

We have two candidates for confirmation this year. The service will be at Wells Cathedral on 7 November. The service is open to anyone who would like to attend and the cathedral is usually full and very joyful.



Fr Hilary Moves On

After many years of faithful service in this benefice, Fr Hilary has decided that it is time for him to move on. We are deeply grateful for all that he has shared with us in his time here, supporting ministry across all our churches and offering kind words of encouragement along the way. We will miss him.

Hilary writes...

I am shortly on the move for both family and personal reasons to Taunton, where I have a flat near the centre of town.

I have to say so many grateful thanks to everyone in the Bruton Benefice and beyond, who over 13 years have given such encouragement and love, particularly in the taking of services.



Further to my local involvement I had been heavily involved in the Six Pilgrims Benefice, and in other churches in the Deanery. Included has been the Chapel at Sexey's Hospital. All round the encouragement and love has been overwhelming!

I would say a big thank you to the present clergy and communities.

I go to Taunton with an open mind. I already have friends and extended family there. I shall also continue my conservation work at the Minster. But as I recently impressed upon Jonathan and the Pitcombe congregation, I go with a prayerful future calling.

'Learn the dignity and humility of the pew' before resuming an active ministry.

With thanksgiving, prayer and love from Hilary.

Inflation and your donations

Inflation is currently running at around 3.5%. That means that you need to increase the level of your donations to the church by 3.5% to avoid a real-terms reduction in the value of your giving. Most people who are in receipt of a pension (whether state, private or from an employer's scheme) will receive inflationary increases in their pension each year. Most people who receive earned income will receive pay rises at least in line with inflation each year.
But the church very rarely receives any increases in the level of donations received from anyone. Many people donate by standing order (which is great!) but do not regularly review the level of their standing order – many have been at the same level for over 10 years. Others give by cash or card but similarly tend to give the same amount year after year.

As readers of this newsletter know, we depend on donations to meet our costs (which do increase at least in line with inflation, usually more). So unless donors regularly review and (where they can) increase their donations, our funding difficulties increase year after year.

Please have a think about this and do what you can to ensure that your giving remains at a level that is appropriate to your income.

Caring for God's Acre



Waxcaps are colourful fungi often called the 'jewels' of UK grasslands. They are important indicators of ancient, undisturbed grassland habitats, especially areas with nutrient-poor soils and short grass maintained by grazing or cutting. Many burial grounds have become valuable refuges for these fungi because they are often the only remnants of ancient grassland habitats that remain.

Despite their ecological importance, grassland fungi are often overlooked. Many waxcap species are considered vulnerable to extinction globally according to assessments by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature). The UK supports significant populations of these fungi, giving it an important responsibility for their conservation.

To help protect waxcaps, Plantlife runs *Waxcap Watch*, a citizen science project now in its seventh year, aimed at newcomers to the world of fungi. Participants use a mobile app to record the colours of waxcaps found in local grassy habitats during autumn. Over six years, volunteers have submitted more than 4,000 surveys across the UK, providing valuable data that helps identify important fungi sites and supports conservation efforts.

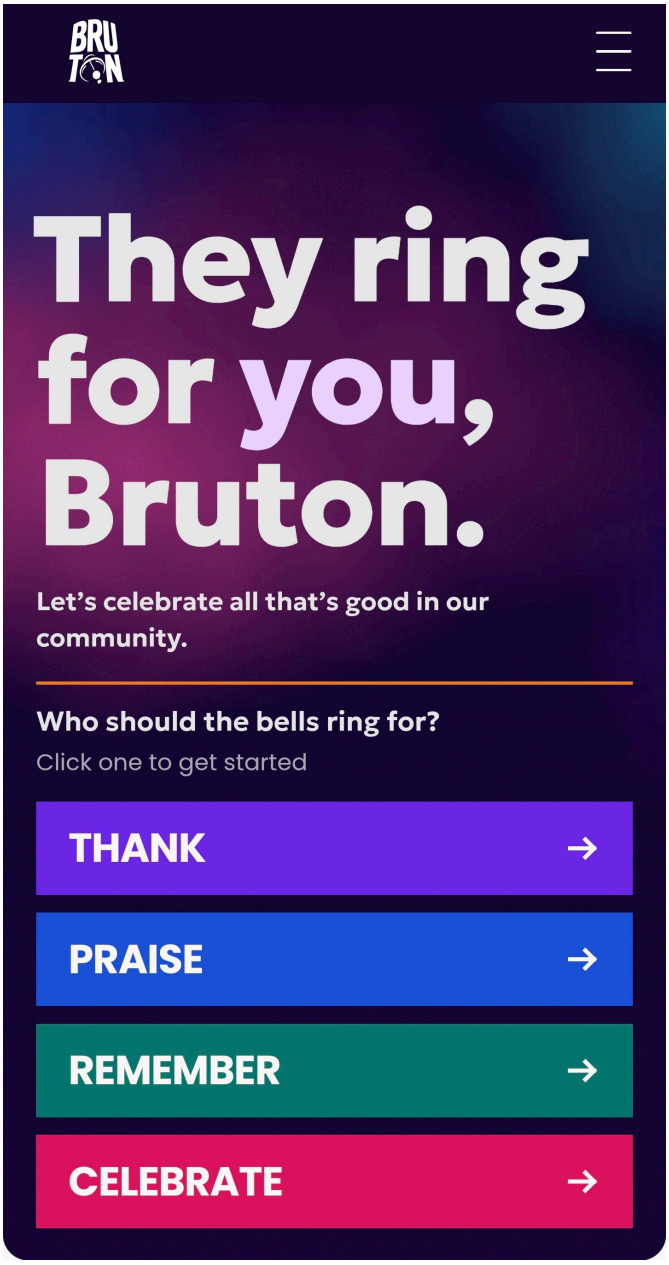
How to take part:

1. Download the *Waxcap Watch* app from the Plantlife website.
2. Visit a grassy habitat such as a burial ground, park, roadside verge, or field.
3. Search for waxcaps and record their colours using the app.

You can find *Waxcap Watch* on the Plantlife website at www.plantlife.org.uk/waxcapwatch. They also offer a free online training course for beginners, covering how to find suitable sites, identify waxcaps, and complete surveys.

Waxcap Watch runs from the beginning of the autumn rain to the first frosts, and everyone can take part, whether they are knowledgeable about fungi or are a complete beginner.





BellringersOfBruton.com – visit our new website!

For centuries, the bells at St Mary's have called us together to celebrate all that is good in our community. With that spirit in mind, our ringers have launched a new website so that we can *thank*, *praise*, *remember*, or *celebrate* people or groups.

If you would like to thank someone for a small kindness, praise a group for doing something good in the community, remember someone who has sadly passed, or celebrate something that has happened, then you can visit the website and let the ringers know. In addition to calling us all to the service on a Sunday morning, they will also ring for the people you have nominated.

So please visit www.bellringersofbruton.com, nominate someone to celebrate, and let's hear St Mary's bells ring out for the peace, kindness, and goodwill in our community.

A Good Gathering

good company bruton

Good Gatherings are regular get-togethers for people doing good things in our community. Hosted by Good Company at least twice a year, they bring together the people behind local groups, charities, events, projects and services to connect, share what they're seeing and hear what's happening across Bruton.

They exist to join the dots. To help people find one another, spot shared challenges and opportunities, avoid duplication, share ideas and resources, and work out where we can help each other make good things happen.

Interested in joining Good Gathering? Please email:
alison@goodcompanybruton.org

Bishop Fiona comes to Deanery Synod

There will be an open meeting of Deanery Synod on 3 November at 7pm in West Camel. Bishop Fiona will share some plans for ways in which support might be offered directly to parishes and will no doubt be willing to answer questions about Diocesan strategy and priorities. The meeting is open to anyone who would like to attend, but the organisers need to know numbers (for catering), so please contact the benefice office if you intend to go and a sign up form can be sent to you.

EVENTS AT ST MARY'S



Join our mailing list

SHEPTON MONTAGUE PCC

in association with

SOMERSET MOVIOLA

proudly presents

TUNER

(2025/107 minutes/15)

Niki (Leo Woodall) works as a piano tuner under the mentorship of Harry (Dustin Hoffman), and the two of them bond over their work and their shared love of music. Niki has hyperacusis, an allergy to loud noises, and when Harry falls ill, Niki, desperate to help pay the hospital bills, gets tangled up in crime, discovering that his condition qualifies him as an exceptional safe-cracker. Meanwhile, he develops feelings for Ruthie (Havana Rose Liu), an aspiring composer.

Director: Daniel Roher

in St Peter's Church, Shepton Montague
Thursday 12th November 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

Moviola
Charity No 1107649

CABARET VOLTAIRE

Cultural events: mostly music, but sometimes poetry and other things



PENGUIN CAFE PERFORMS MUSIC FROM THE PENGUIN CAFE ORCHESTRA LIVE

Penguin Cafe, Saturday 14 November, 8pm, St Mary's Church

Marking 50 years since the release of *Music from the Penguin Cafe*! The current show 'Penguin Cafe performs Music from the Penguin Cafe Orchestra' pays homage to the original PCO music featuring performances of classic compositions that have been captivating listeners for decades. Audiences can expect to hear beloved works like *Music from a Found Harmonium* and *Perpetuum Mobile* delivered with the ensemble's signature warmth and inventiveness. This tour not only celebrates the enduring legacy of the Penguin Cafe Orchestra but also showcases the continued evolution of their sound under Arthur Jeffes direction.

TICKETS

https://cabaretvoltaireevents.com/event/penguin-cafe-performs-music-from-the-penguin-cafe-orchestra-live-bruton/



St Mary's Poppies 2026

Remembrance each November is a special time whatever our political or religious beliefs and the Poppy remains a humble, poignant symbol of that Remembrance and hope.

As the last two years, from late October until Remembrance Day 2026 there will be a display of ceramic Poppies in the grounds of St Mary's Church, Bruton.

There will also be poppies on show in St Mary's Church from 23rd October and you will be able to donate money for the Poppy Appeal and St Mary's Church.

Thank you to all those who helped make the poppies.

Mary Aston



BRUTON CHORAL SOCIETY

Christmas Coffee Morning



Saturday 21 November 10am

Bruton Community Hall

Bacon butties, cakes, savoury bakes & Festive Raffle

CHRISTMAS

Coffee Morning





Tuesday 1st December

10.30am to 12.30pm

BREWHAM VILLAGE HALL

Come and join us for some Festive Fun

with Coffee Mulled Wine

Mince Pies Cakes

Mystery Raffle Christmas Gifts









In Aid of St John the Baptist Church South Brewham


South West Baroque Orchestra
A BAROQUE CHRISTMAS
Saturday 5th December 6pm
St Mary's Church Bruton
Handel - Airs & Dances from the Water Music
Pachelbel - Canon in D
Bach - Sinfonia from the Christmas Oratorio
Vivaldi - Concerto for 2 recorders
Corelli - Christmas Concerto
Seasonal Carols
Refreshments available
Tickets £15 (U16s free)
www.stmarysbruton.org/events & on the door
5 Silver Street Bruton BA10 0EB



Katherine Priddy, Friday 11 December, 8pm, St Mary's Church

Katherine Priddy released her third album, *These Frightening Machines*, in March 2026 to critical acclaim. The new record follows Priddy's highly acclaimed debut *The Eternal Rocks Beneath* and sophomore LP *The Pendulum Swing* which firmly established her as one of the most exciting artists on the contemporary British music scene. Priddy has sold out headline tours and supported world class artists with her haunting vocals and distinctive finger-picking guitar style. She recently wrote and released two songs with Poet Laureate Simon Armitage and performed on the legendary BBC *Later with Jools Holland* TV show.

TICKETS

https://www.ticketsource.com/booking/select/meepoapoooob

Bruton Choral Society

Musical Director: Barbara Jenkinson

Christmas Concert



Vaughan Williams:

Fantasia on Christmas Carols

Music by Rutter and Gjeilo

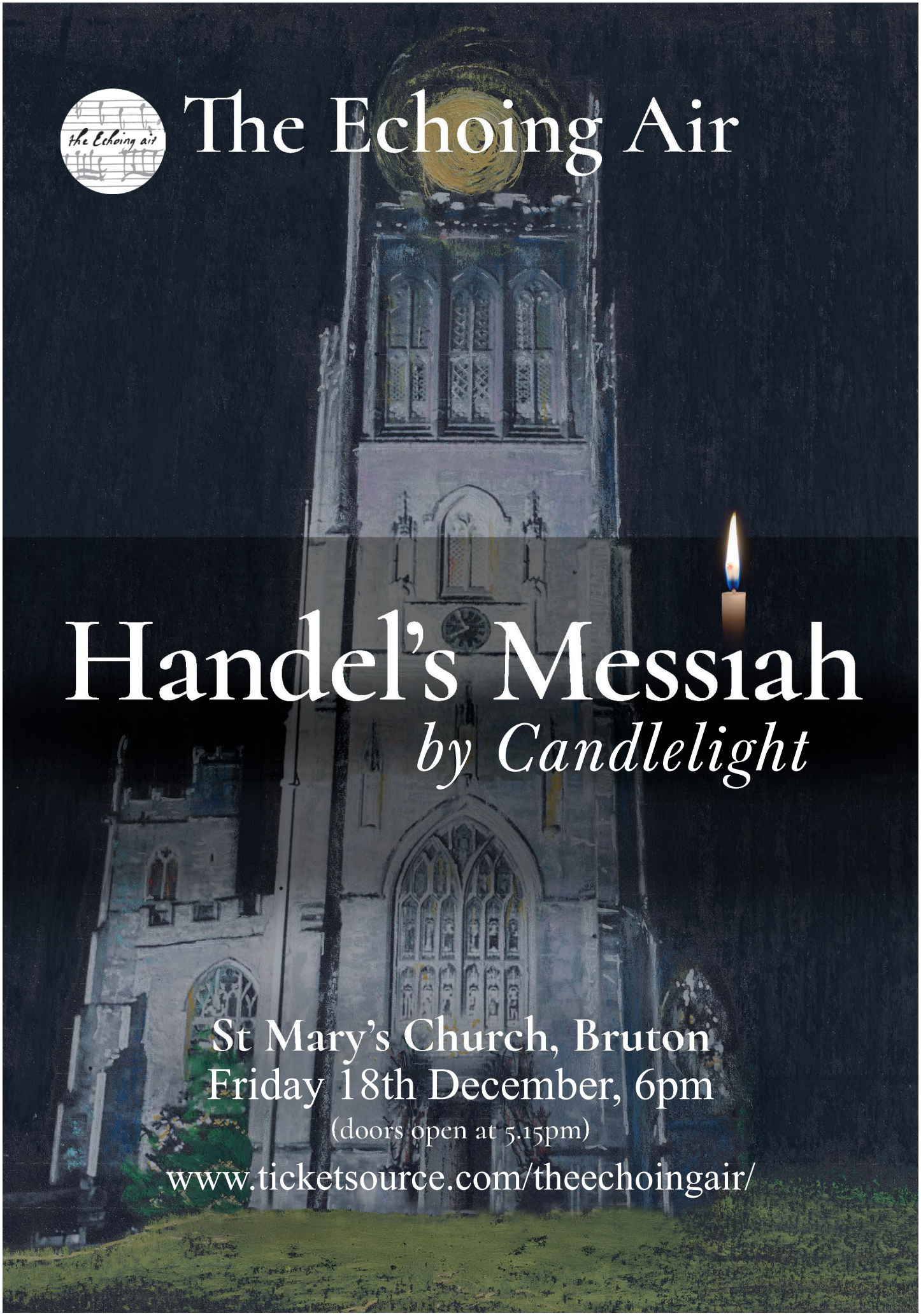
Festive music

Angela Ashworth: Soprano
Geoff Allan: Baritone
Ashley Marshfield: Organ
Clare Sydenham: Piano
Stringendo Ensemble

MONDAY 14 DECEMBER 7.30PM

ST MARY'S BRUTON

£12 advance tickets, £15 on the day, children free
including a glass of wine
Bruton Convenience Store, 01749 813976 or
www.brutonchoralsociety.org.uk


the Echoing air
The Echoing Air
Handel's Messiah
by Candlelight
St Mary's Church, Bruton
Friday 18th December, 6pm
(doors open at 5.15pm)
www.ticketsource.com/theechoingair/

Benefice Services in November

Season All Saints to Advent	**Sunday 1 November** All Saints	**Monday 2nd November** All Souls	**Sunday 8 November** Remembrance Sunday
St John the Baptist, Brewham	**9.30am** Eucharist (CW)		**10.30am** Remembrance Sunday
St Mary's, Bruton	**8am** Holy Communion (BCP) **11am** Sung Eucharist	**6pm** All Souls	**8am** Holy Communion (BCP) **11.15am** Remembrance Sunday
St Leonard's, Pitcombe	**4pm** Patronal Evensong (BCP)		**10.50am** Remembrance Sunday
St Peter's, Redlynch			
St Peter's, Shepton Montague			**9.30am** Remembrance Sunday
Holy Trinity, Wyke			
St Nicholas, Bratton Seymour			

Benefice Services in November

Season All Saints to Advent	**Sunday 15 November** 2 before Advent	**Sunday 22 November** Christ the King	**Sunday 29 November** Advent Sunday
St John the Baptist, Brewham			
St Mary's, Bruton	**8am** Holy Communion (BCP) **11am** All Age Worship	**8am** Holy Communion (BCP) **9am** Breakfast Service **11am** Eucharist (CW1)	**8am** Holy Communion (BCP) **4.30pm** Advent Choral Evensong (BCP)
St Leonard's, Pitcombe	**11am** Holy Communion (BCP)	**4pm** Evensong (BCP)	
St Peter's, Redlynch			
St Peter's, Shepton Montague		**9.30am** Eucharist (CW1)	
Holy Trinity, Wyke			
St Nicholas, Bratton Seymour	**9.30am** Holy Communion (BCP)		

Christmas Services in

Advent

Sun 29 Nov	St Mary's Advent Evensong 4.30pm

Carol Services & Christmas Music

Sat 5 Dec	St Nicholas, Bratton Seymour, 5pm
Mon 14 Dec	Choral Society Christmas Concert, St Mary's, 7.30pm
Wed 16 Dec	Holy Trinity, Wyke, 6.30pm
Fri 18 Dec	Messiah, St Mary's, 6pm
Sat 19 Dec	St Leonard's, Pitcombe, 4pm
Sat 19 Dec	St Mary's, Bruton, 6.30pm
Sun 20 Dec	St John's, Brewham, 4pm
Sun 20 Dec	St Peter's, Shepton Montague, 6pm
Wed 23 Dec	St Peter's, Redlynch, 5.30pm



the Benefice of Bruton

Christmas Eve

St Mary's Christingle ,4.30pm

St Mary's Midnight Mass, 11.30pm (Eucharist)

Christmas Day

St Mary's, Bruton, Holy Communion (BCP), 8am

St Mary's, Bruton, Eucharist, 11am

St Peter's, Shepton Montague, Eucharist, 9.30am

St Leonard's, Pitcombe, Holy Communion (BCP), 9.30am

St John Baptist, Brewham, Eucharist, 10am



www.stmarysbruton.org

Diary Dates

November

1 . St Leonard's, Pitcombe, Patronal Festival, 4pm
2 . All Souls, St Mary's, Bruton, 6pm
3 . Deanery Synod, West Camel, 7pm
4 . **EVENT**: Brewham Quiz Night, Village Hall, 6.30pm
8 . Remembrance Sunday
12 . **EVENT**: Shepton Film Night, St Peter's, 7.30pm
13 . Pitcombe PCC, 2.30pm
14 . **EVENT**: Penguin Cafe, St Mary's, 8pm
17 . BrueCrew AGM, At the Chapel, 7 for 7.30pm
22 . Brewham PCC, Haven Farm, 7pm
24 . Shepton PCC, Village Hall, 6pm
29 . St Mary's Advent Evensong, 4.30pm
30 . Benefice Discussion Group, 3 & 6pm, details tbc

December

3 . **EVENT**: Late Night Shopping
5 . St Nicholas' Carol Service, Bratton Seymour, 5pm
5 . **EVENT**: South West Baroque Orchestra, St Mary's, 6pm
7 . Benefice Discussion Group, 3 & 6pm, details tbc
11 . **EVENT**: Katherine Priddy, St Mary's, 8pm
12 . Pitcombe Christmas Party, details tbc
14 . Benefice Discussion Group, 3 & 6pm, details tbc
14 . Bruton Choral Society Christmas Concert, St Mary's, 7.30pm

Diary Dates

16 . Holy Trinity Carol Service, Wyke Champflower, 6.30pm

18 . **EVENT**: The Echoing Air, MESSIAH, St Mary's, 6pm

19 . St Mary's Carol Service, Bruton, 6.30pm

20 . St John's Carol Service, Brewham, 4pm

20 . St Peter's Carol Service, Shepton Montague, 6pm

21 . Benefice Discussion Group, 3 & 6pm, details tbc

23 . St Peter's Carol Service, Redlynch, 5.30pm

24 . Christingle Service, St Mary's, 4.30pm

24 . Midnight Mass, St Mary's, 11.30pm

Christmas Day Services

- St Mary's, Bruton, Holy Communion, 8am
- St Leonard's, Pitcombe, Holy Communion, 9.30am
- St Peter's, Shepton Montague, Christmas Day Service, 9.30am
- St John's, Brewham, Christmas Eucharist, 10am
- St Mary's, Bruton, Christmas Eucharist, 11am

Contact

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