

POSTLEBURY NEWSLETTER

January 2022

From the Rectory

Happy New Year! Although I'm actually writing this before Christmas, I hope you've managed to have an enjoyable Christmas and New year as far as the present circumstances allowed. We spend a long time getting ready for these celebrations and yet when they arrive, they seem to fly by too quickly for us to really savour and enjoy them. And this year has seemed more frantic than usual since we couldn't predict when or whether a new Lockdown might suddenly curtail our plans.

Looking through our stack for a particular Christmas card this year, it was noticeable how few of them depicted the nativity; the stable at Bethlehem; the babe in the manger, or the arrival of the wise men: all or any of the details from the Christmas story. Perhaps these cards are not being produced in such numbers anymore due to the secularisation of the Christmas celebration, or maybe they were saying something about the senders! There were quite a few Christmas trees, the odd tipsy robin with crown askew, and actually quite a few birds, predominately doves, with the inscription 'Peace on Earth'. The dove as symbol of peace comes from the early chapters of the book of Genesis, when Noah sends out a dove to explore the flooded earth. The dove eventually returns with an olive branch (also a sign of peace in the ancient world), signifying the return of the earth to a habitable, fruitful environment for Noah and his precious cargo.

The dove is also a symbol of freedom. It can fly off and go wherever it wants, it can land or not land whenever it pleases. Perhaps, in these times we are, subconsciously at least, rather envious of such freedom. And yet the last two years have shown us how resourceful we can be: a sense of freedom can be found much closer to home. Anne Frank, who certainly knew all about the curtailment of freedom, wrote: *'The best remedy for those who are afraid, or lonely, or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, with nature and with God. Only then does one feel that all is as it should be, and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of his natural world.'* May this happiness be ours this coming year!

With best wishes and every blessing.

Fr. Anthony

Church Services in the Benefices of Stoke St. Michael, Leigh on Mendip and Downhead and in the Parish of Postlebury

2nd January - Epiphany

09.30	Wanstrow	Holy Communion	
11.00	Leigh-on-Mendip	All Age Service	
18.00	Stoke St Michael	Evensong	<i>Jane Evans</i>

7th January (Friday)

10.00	Nunney	Holy Communion BCP	
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9th January – Baptism of Christ

09.30	Stoke St Michael	Holy Communion	
11.00	Witham	Family Communion	
18.00	Nunney	Soul Food	<i>Lay Led</i>

14th January (Friday)

10.00	Nunney	Holy Communion BCP	
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16th January – 2nd Sunday of Epiphany

09.30	Nunney	Holy Communion	
11.00	Stoke St Michael	Family Communion	
18.00	Downhead	Evensong - Plough Sunday	

21st January (Friday)

10.00	Nunney	Holy Communion BCP	
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23rd January – 3rd Sunday of Epiphany

09.30	Leigh on Mendip	Holy Communion	
11.00	Cloford	Holy Communion	
11.00	Marston	Matins	<i>Jonathan Cheal</i>

28th January (Friday)

10.00	Nunney	Holy Communion BCP	
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30th January – 4th Sunday of Epiphany - Candlemass

10.00	Wanstrow	Holy Communion-Combined Benefice Service	
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4th February (Friday)

10.00 Nunney

Holy Communion BCP

6th February – 4th Sunday before Lent

09.30 Wanstrow

Holy Communion

11.00 Leigh-on-Mendip

All Age Service

15.00 Stoke St Michael

Christingle

Services conducted by Revd Anthony Dickson unless otherwise stated

From the Registers

Friday 10th December, Anne Mason, Funeral, Wanstrow, followed by burial

Tuesday 14th December, Anthea Brooks, Funeral at Mendip Crematorium

Friday 17th December, Christine Marks, Funeral, at Mendip Crematorium

Saturday 18th December, Wedding of Otto Poole and Anna Swingler at Marston

Tuesday 21st December, David Duncan, Funeral, at Mendip Crematorium

Wednesday 22nd December, David Newton, Funeral, All Saints, Nunney followed by burial at Byfields Cemetery

Note on the current Covid situation:

Please take a lateral flow test before attending a church service, if possible.

Do not attend if you have any Covid symptoms.

We are still wearing masks in Church and receiving Communion in one kind, and will review the situation week by week.

Events for your diary...

Note: **Fr Anthony is away from the 3rd - 10th January inclusive**

Please note: **There will be NO Friday BCP Communion at Nunney on Friday 7th January**

Little Saplings Carers and Tots group - will resume in Nunney Village Hall at 9.30 am on Wednesday 5th January

Meditation in Wanstrow Church - Thursday 13th January at 7.30 pm. All welcome

Soul Food - the next informal service of prayer, praise and worship will take place in Nunney Church on Sunday 9th January at 6 pm

Life Groups - are resuming fortnightly from Monday 10th January. For more information contact Caroline at nunneychurchwardens@gmail.com or Justine North at justine.north@btinternet.com

Dorothy Wilcox – Funeral at All Saints Nunney. Wednesday 12th January at 10.30 am

Parish of Postlebury - Key Contacts

Priest-in-charge: Rev. Anthony Dickson, The Rectory, Nunney, Frome. BA11 4LZ
Telephone: 01373 837337. Email: Nunney.rectory@gmail.com (day off is Monday).

PCC Secretary and Administrator: postleburysecretary@gmail.com

PCC Hon Treasurer: Mr Steve Elliott - treasurerpostlebury@gmail.com

**If you would like to come off our mailing list please contact
dataprotectionpostlebury@gmail.com**

A star to guide us

By Ruth Worsley, Bishop of Taunton

What will 2022 bring I wonder? Two years ago Covid was just a vague murmur coming from the East. How could we have known it would have such an impact or for so long?

How might this year be different? Well, there is much to look forward to. We expect to have a new diocesan bishop joining us. We will be celebrating 70 years of the Queen's reign. The World Cup is on... and we have a chance! And then there are all the other excitements of anniversaries, milestones and hopes and dreams we all have.

As we begin this new year my mind turns to those Eastern travellers long ago who saw a star in the sky, set out on an uncharted journey which took maybe up to two years, and eventually found a King. Not the sort of king expected but One who opened up new horizons for the whole world. One who offers us love, forgiveness and a way back to God.

At this time when we are asking questions that search for deeper meaning, this seems a story which resonates. What sort of journey will you take this year? At a recent clergy pre-Advent retreat we were reminded

that it is not so much us walking with God but rather God walking with us. So, no matter what twists and turns the road takes, or even if we slip from following in God's Way, He will never give up on us and will never let us walk alone.

This year, as last, we shall be seeking to dwell on some words from scripture and allow them to permeate into our being. The following verses from that passage, seem to offer us the light of a star to guide us as we navigate our journey in the year to come.

'Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.' Philippians 4: 4-7

May you know God's presence and grace as He walks with you into this New Year! Please know that my prayers will continue to be with you.

Yours with the love of Christ,

+ Ruth Worsley

A safe space to think, discuss, pray and reflect

Assistant Curate and Chaplain Ruth Motion shares her thoughts on the LLF course.



Ruth Motion at her ordination

How did you find the course?

It was great, very challenging, but great. It really makes you think about yourself, your views and how you feel about others. It's well written and the short videos are very thought provoking. Sometimes it was really heart-breaking to find out how some had been treated by churches.

Was the course information clear?

It's very well set out and presented, even if you were leading it without a facilitator. We each had little booklets so we could follow the Bible passage for the week and see the questions which we were discussing. The videos and personal stories were so moving. They really make you think.

Any advice for someone considering the course?

If anyone is nervous about doing the course I would say 'don't be'. Yes it makes you think, yes you will be talking about all sorts of things that you would never normally discuss in a church context, but it's very well done. It gives you the opportunity, in a safe space, to ask questions that you may have had for years, but didn't want to ask. The media seems to have focused on only one aspect of the course, that of homosexuality, but it's so much more.

Do you think the Church will benefit from people doing the course?

Yes, hugely. Everyone has the chance to have their opinion heard and although any future decisions made within the Church of England may not please everyone, regardless of what they are, at least everyone has had the chance to think, discuss, pray and reflect.

Read the full interview at:

bathandwells.org.uk/llf-interview

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From the Church of England Diocese of Bath and Wells



January 2022

Join the conversation

Church communities across Somerset are being encouraged to take part in a process of learning and praying together as part of discerning a way forward for the Church in relation to matters of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.

There are a range of Living in Love and Faith (LLF) resources to help facilitate the conversations on a dedicated Learning Hub. They include two versions of a 5-session course for local groups - one for youths and young adults and another for general use. They are designed to facilitate open, honest, and gracious learning and discussion among churchgoers across the country.

Churches have been asked to take part in the course by the end of April 2022 and to share their learnings, reflections and insights via the online hub or email. Individuals can also respond the same way. This is understood to be the most extensive undertaking of any church



LIVING
IN LOVE
& FAITH

to hear and articulate as wide a range of voices, lived experiences and theological understandings as possible on these issues.

The course examines the six roadblocks - prejudice, silence, ignorance, fear, hypocrisy, and power - that impair relationships, hinder our personal growth as Christians, and create barriers that stop our churches from growing into Christian communities of welcome and belonging. They draw together the Bible, theology, science, and history with powerful real-life stories.

Churches can go through the course themselves, or if they wish, utilise one of the 21 Bath and Wells facilitators. Find out more about LLF and how you can take part at bathandwells.org.uk/living-in-love-faith ■

News in brief

God calls everyone

In February, everyone is invited to join us for 'God calls: everyone, everywhere' a week of exploring the many and varied ways in which God calls us during our lives.

The week will start on Sunday, 6 February with a launch service with Bishop Ruth and from Monday to Friday there will be on demand video content featuring people across the diocese talking about their experience of calling and sharing stories of calling from the Bible.

On Saturday, the week will close with online gatherings to reflect and celebrate all that the week has held. ■



Join us on our Eco journey

In the next few months, we will be following a number of the church communities in Bath and Wells, as they think about some of the environmental challenges, they face in order to reach the Church of England target to be net zero by 2030.



Ready for planting

School's Jubilee trees

Each pupil at Old Cleeve Church of England First School has been given a tree sapling to plant along the Steam Coast Trail as part of the Queen's Green Canopy marking her Platinum Jubilee. The trees, donated by the Woodland Trust, are the latest in a long line of eco projects undertaken by the school and are encouraged and led by the school's caretaker, Keith Hunt. ■

One of those we have talked with is St Cuthbert's Church in Wells, who are considering changing their heating system to make it more sustainable, environmentally-friendly and cheaper to run. Keep up to date with our environmental news: bathandwells.org.uk/news ■