

# POSTLEBURY NEWSLETTER

December 2021

## From the Rectory

Back in 'lockdown' this time last year, after a rise in Covid 19 cases last November, we were all looking forward to the Christmas season with something of a sense of dread. I wonder how much has changed since then. Cases in Europe have been soaring and we are expecting at least some increases here, though thankfully the booster jab that over 15 million of us have had seems to be having an effect, keeping hospitalizations low. But many families will be having Christmas this year without the presence of a loved one because of Covid, and we remember them in our prayers.

In this contingent world many of us are forced into situations for which we feel ill-prepared; 'we never saw this coming' we say. Every year, Christmas reminds us that God came into a world that was largely unprepared for Him, or the message he was born to bring. They didn't see it coming. And yet of course, some did, or at least they knew something was up: the wise men, the shepherds, Mary and Joseph of course, and later, John the Baptist.

In Advent, we begin by looking further back, in the Old Testament, to the experiences of those who began to perceive God at work in his creation. Advent reminds us that we are better prepared to read the signs of our times if we make ourselves aware of what has gone on before. We all know how easy it is to be so taken up with the details of our own concerns that we don't look up to see what's coming. Even in our connected world, we so easily fail to grasp the bigger picture: hence the current climate crisis!

Our annual remembrances and traditions are there for a reason: they help us to understand who we are, and how we have come to be here. Of course, not every tradition is of equal value, and we need to revise and re-assess them as we go along. Nevertheless, they are often the fruit of hard-won experience, and treated with caution they can help us to map out our future.

And at its best, as the Austrian composer Gustav Mahler is supposed to have noted, 'tradition is not the worship of ashes, but the preservation of fire'.

Wishing you all, when it comes, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Fr Anthony**

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

## 3rd December (Friday)

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion BCP

## 5th December – 2nd Sunday of Advent

09.30 Wanstrow Holy Communion

11.00 Leigh-on-Mendip All Age Service

15.00 Stoke St Michael Concert (no Evensong)

## 10th December (Friday)

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion BCP

## 12th December – 3rd Sunday of Advent

09.30 Stoke St Michael Holy Communion

11.00 Witham Family Communion

17.00 Wanstrow Christingle & Carols

## 18th December (Saturday)

17.00 - 19.00 Witham Witham's Window Wonderland  
Pop-in Carols, Christingle, Nativity

## 19th December – 4th Sunday of Advent

09.30 Nunney Holy Communion

15.00 Leigh on Mendip Carol Service

18.00 Downhead Carol Service

18.00 Nunney Carol Service *Lay Led*

18.00 Stoke St Michael Carol Service *Rev C North*

## 20th December (Monday)

18.30 Cloford Candlelit Carol Service

## 24th December – Christmas Eve

16.00 Stoke St Michael Crib Service *Rev C North*

18.30 Marston Carol Service *Lay Led*

23.30 Stoke St Michael Midnight Mass *Rev. C North*

23.30 Witham Midnight Mass

### **25th December - Christmas Day**

<b>9.30</b>	<b>Wanstrow</b>	Holy Communion	
<b>10.00</b>	<b>Stoke St Michael</b>	Family Communion	<i>Rev C North</i>
<b>10.30</b>	<b>Nunney</b>	All Age Service	<i>Lay Led</i>
<b>11.00</b>	<b>Leigh on Mendip</b>	Holy Communion	

### **26th December - 1st Sunday of Christmas**

<b>10.00</b>	<b>Nunney</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)	
--------------	---------------	----------------------	--

.....

### **2nd January - Epiphany**

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

*Services conducted by Revd Anthony Dickson unless otherwise stated*

### **From the Registers**

Wednesday 10th November, Wanstrow, Funeral and Burial of Mary Worsfold

Thursday 4th November, Marston, Funeral for John Harding and Tuesday 23rd November, Memorial for John Harding

Anthea Brooks - Passed away on 16th November (Funeral TBC)

Friday 10th December, 14.00, at Wanstrow, Anne Mason, Funeral - followed by burial

Saturday 18th December, 13.00, at Marston, Wedding of Otto Poole and Anna Swingler

## **Note on the current Covid situation:**

Following advice and in view of the alarming rise in Covid infection rates, I am asking for your support in returning to the wearing of masks for our services in church. Reluctantly, I think we should also go back to taking Communion in one kind only. ie. just the wafer. I am hoping this will only be for a short period as government projections seem to indicate that infections will fall soon. We will monitor the situation week by week.

## **Events for your diary...**

Saturday 4th December, 10.30-16.00 Wanstrow Christmas Fair, Village Hall

Sunday 5th December 14.00-17.00 Marston Church – Open Mic event for singers and musicians. £3 entry to include free tea or coffee.

Sunday 5th December, 15.00, Stoke St Michael, Concert: 'Coffee and Carols'. Tickets £3.00 from the village shop or pub or [ssmceg@outlook.com](mailto:ssmceg@outlook.com)

Sunday 12th December, 17.00, Wanstrow, Christingle Carols

Saturday 18th December, 17.00 - 19.00, Witham's Window Wonderland Pop-in Carols, Christingle, Nativity.

Monday 20th December, 18.30, Cloford, Candlelit Carol Service

Thursday 23rd December, 16.00, Nunney, Roving Nativity (starting at Castle Hill Quarry, ending in church)

Friday 24th December, 16.00, Stoke St Michael, Crib Service

## **Parish of Postlebury - Key Contacts**

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

**PCC Secretary and Administrator:** [postleburysecretary@gmail.com](mailto:postleburysecretary@gmail.com)

**PCC Hon Treasurer:** Mr Steve Elliott - [treasurerpostlebury@gmail.com](mailto:treasurerpostlebury@gmail.com)

**If you would like to come off our mailing list please contact [dataprotectionpostlebury@gmail.com](mailto:dataprotectionpostlebury@gmail.com)**

# manna

From the Church of England Diocese of Bath and Wells    ⊕    December 2021

## At the heart of Christmas

A Christmas message from Bishop Ruth

**W**hat is at the heart of Christmas for you? Is it the feasting and festivities? The carols and the candles? The stockings and the gifts? Or the presence of those you love?

This Christmas we may find ourselves investing more in our preparations, as last year's plans were curtailed or cancelled. We were to have had all our family gather before my husband had a positive Covid test. Everything changed and neither of us felt well enough to enjoy a special meal together let alone welcome others. So, this year I want to pull out all the stops!

The children and grandchildren will be with us and apparently Father Christmas will be paying a special visit! However, we are also wanting to make sure that we don't get carried away with all the tinsel and trappings and forget the heart of the story. So, we shall limit our spending on pressies but make sure

that we really value the presence of one another and particularly of the Christ child at the heart of it all.

This year as you anticipate Christmas, through the stories told through Advent windows, or carol services, how might you prepare your heart for the coming Christ child? The wonder of Christmas is that God has never given up on us and in fact loves us so much that he wants to spend time with us. The birth of Jesus, God's Son, into a humble human family, brought God into our very midst, into the heart of our homes. This Christmas let's make space for Him once more and listen to the words of love, hope and joy He wants to share with us. And may that inspire our faith in the future, for ourselves and our world.

Wishing you much joy and peace this Christmas.

Bishop Ruth

**At the heart  
of Christmas**



# News in brief

## New pupil chaplains for Wellington

St John's CofE Primary School is celebrating having seven new pupil chaplains.

The pupil chaplains, who volunteered for the role and had special training, will be supported by their school chaplain. They hope to plan and prepare Collective Worship and community events, help on the playground and take part in assemblies ■



## Churches & schools mark COP26

At St Thomas', Wells COP26 was marked with an all age service on climate change.

Artwork by children from Horrington and Stoberry primary schools was on display and inspired the congregation to write individual pledges that focused on what they could do to help look after our world. After the service the pledges and artwork remained on display for visitors to view ■

## A special carol service

St Mary's, Timsbury is holding a carol service for special needs children and their families on 12 December. Revd Julian Davies, himself a father of a son with autism and severe learning difficulties, says, "Families with special needs children can feel very isolated. As a family we wouldn't have gone to the pantomime

were it not for their special performances. I know it can be difficult taking a child with special needs to such a service as other families often don't understand the behaviour of the child with special needs. I am hoping to give them a space where they feel welcome and comfortable among people in a similar situation." ■

# Join us this Christmas

How will you experience the joy of Christmas this year?

**W**e hope and pray that many of the familiar experiences that help Christmas come alive return to our homes, our churches and communities, but whatever December brings there are number of ways you can embrace the true spirit of Christmas where you are.

Services and nativities are being planned in churches, online and the Christmas story is being brought to life in a host of creative ways: St George's, Wembdon is taking its mobile nativity around the community again; a number of places are holding Advent window displays while St Mary's, Tisbury is holding a service designed to accommodate children with special needs and their carers.

You can join us in Advent as we take a global perspective and journey through the account of Jesus' birth. Developed with children and young people in mind by our youth advisers, along with [the Send a Cow charity](#) and [Movement, the youth and young adult ministry](#), our Advent activities have something to offer all ages.

Each week of Advent will begin

with a two-minute video presented by Sam Davis and Emily Hatton, from the Movement family, and feature Send a Cow project workers in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia reading part of the Christmas story from the Good News translation of the Bible. Christmas Day's video will feature Bishop Ruth. There will also be daily challenges on social media; all based around the themes of hope, joy, peace and love.

You can also join the Church of England online with their 'At the heart of Christmas' campaign, which is an invitation to everyone to discover – or rediscover – the good news of God's saving love as revealed in the birth of Jesus. Starting on Christmas Eve and continuing daily (Monday to Saturday) until Epiphany on 6 January, you will be able to hear 12 stories and meditations from the archbishops and guests as they explore themes close to the heart of Christmas ■



# A time to celebrate

Emily Hatton, who features in our Advent campaign, prepares for her first Christmas as a Youth Minister



How did you get involved in the campaign?

Having worked with Movement, the Go Team and Send a Cow over the years it was great to get involved with the joint Advent Around the World project. Those who read the scriptures do so with such joy, that it's almost like hearing them for the first time. It really gets you thinking about what Christmas is all about.

What does Christmas mean to you?

For me, Christmas is (obviously) all about Jesus. But it's so hard not to get caught up in the commercialisation of Christmas that's happened in our developed countries, isn't it? But for me,

Christmas is about remembering that God so loved the world that He gave his one and only son – God incarnate. So for me, Christmas is really exciting!

How will you celebrate with young people in your church?

I'm looking forward to getting stuck in with all that will be happening: Christingle, carol services, a community Christmas tree festival, and school events. We hope to have a number of the youth group getting baptised in the weeks leading up to Christmas. What an amazing time to see teenagers commit their lives to living wholeheartedly for Jesus!

How do they feel about this year's Christmas celebrations?

After last year, I think the young people are just looking forward to taking up their Christmas traditions again, seeing their family and friends - and not just on the one day! Carols were really missed, so being able to sing again is really exciting. Read the full interview at [www.bathandwells.org.uk/youth-christmas](http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/youth-christmas) ■

Follow us on



@BathWells



bathandwells



churchofengland\_somerset



DIOCESE OF  
**Bath & Wells**

Living the story. Telling the story.