

POSTLEBURY NEWSLETTER - April 2022

An article in the press recently coined the phrase 'perma-crisis': the idea that we are experiencing an era of permanent crisis. For Britons this began with Brexit six years ago, which was then overshadowed by COVID 19. Now the war in Ukraine is taking over, and Europe is being dragged into the kind of conflict we thought we had left behind forever in the 20th Century. To compound matters, there has not been time to evaluate the lasting effect, or recover from one crisis before another one is upon us. In the light of this, and as the cost of living soars, we hesitate in making plans or commitments from which we might find it difficult or embarrassing to withdraw, especially if there are financial implications. Personal and professional relationships can become strained, and mental and physical health suffers as we live with the anxiety of so much uncertainty. This underlying anxiety is fed by the way that we receive news: incessantly, globally, and through a multitude of channels.

Where do we find hope in the face these crises? What can we believe in when we see the terrible things that people, and nations, can do to each other? The sight of suffering such as we see in Ukraine recently can have a profound effect on the beliefs of those with the strongest faith. Having a faith doesn't automatically come with a God's eye view of what is going on. And yet people without faith often express surprise when they see believers struggling at the sight of terrible things happening in the world. It is hard for them to see what advantages come with having faith. The experience of most believers though, is that there is an ebb and flow to faith, that searches and questions, and is very often strengthened in the process. They find that belief in a divinely upheld and sustained world offers a sense of purpose and direction. And though it is often unseen or not at all obvious, such faith helps to shape our world to the good. It brings relief in the face of suffering and offers the hope that ultimately there will be a positive outcome.

This is the meaning that people of faith draw from the story of Easter which we celebrate this month: that despite the betrayal and dereliction of the cross, Jesus rose from the dead, to offer new hope and new life to all who put their trust in him.

Happy Easter!
Fr Anthony

Events for your diary

Lent Groups continue to meet at Millards Hill (Wednesdays at 11am) and Witham, Nunney and Stoke at 7.30 pm on Mondays. There is a Zoom option. Contact nunneychurchwardens@gmail.com for more information.

Tuesday 26th April at 7.30 pm in Wanstrow Village Hall

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting, when the annual report for 2021 is presented to the Parish of Postlebury and the elections take place for all the officers of the parish (PCC members, churchwardens, church committees and Deanery Synod). You are warmly welcome to attend and it would be helpful if you could email postleburysecretary@gmail.com if you plan to come.

If you wish to vote or stand in the elections you need to be on the electoral roll for Postlebury. If you are not sure whether you are on this list, do please contact Jennifer Brook (01373 837444) or email postleburysecretary@gmail.com. There is a simple form to complete.

22nd April 2022 at 7 pm in Nunney Village Hall, there will be the long-postponed performance of "The Wedding Party", a multimedia presentation by a very special group of young adults with learning difficulties, called The Enterprise Players. The doors will open at 6.30 pm and there will be refreshments. Tickets are £10 each from the churchwardens or from Mrs Anne Dalgety (annedalgety@gmail.com). The performance is in aid of The Enterprise Players and the Parish of Postlebury.

Teas in Nunney Church will resume on Easter Monday from 3-5 pm and every Sunday throughout the summer.

Wednesday 11th May: Belshazzar's Feast will be performing their postponed concert in St Leonard's Church, Marston at 7.30pm. Tickets £15 - more information at www.marstonmusic.co.uk

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

**SERVICES IN THE PARISH OF POSTLEBURY AND THE BENEFICES OF
STOKE ST MICHAEL AND LEIGH UPON MENDIP WITH DOWNHEAD
APRIL 2022**

1st April (Friday)

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion BCP

3rd April - 5th Sunday of Lent

09.30 Wanstrow Holy Communion

11.00 Leigh-on-Mendip Family Communion

18.00 Stoke St Michael Evensong *Jane Evans*

8th April (Friday)

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion BCP

10th April - Palm Sunday

09.30 Stoke St Michael Holy Communion

11.00 Witham Family Communion

18.00 Nunney Soul Food *Chris North*

14th April - Maundy Thursday

19.00 Witham Holy Communion

15th April - Good Friday

14.00 Downhead Last Hour of the Cross

16th April - Easter Saturday

20.00 Cloford Easter Eve Service

17th April - Easter Sunday

09.30 Wanstrow Holy Communion

10.30 Nunney All age service *Henry Pomeroy*

11.00 Stoke St Michael Holy Communion

18.00 Leigh-on-Mendip Holy Communion

22nd April (Friday)

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion (BCP) *David Gatcliffe*

24th April - 2nd Sunday of Easter

11.00 Cloford Holy Communion

11.00 Marston Matins *Jonathan Cheal*

29th April (Friday)

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion (BCP) *David Gatcliffe*

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1st May

09.30 Wanstrow Holy Communion

11.00 Leigh-on-Mendip Family Communion

18.00 Stoke St Michael Evensong *Jane Evans*

Services conducted by The Revd. Anthony Dickson unless otherwise stated

From the Registers

3rd March. Funeral and burial of Christopher Perkins - Stoke St Michael

4th March. Memorial service and burial of Cremated remains of Pete Dawes - Wanstrow

9th March. Funeral and burial of Delia Symes - Wanstrow

20th March Baptism of Aubree Rose Marilyn Smith - Nunney

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From the Church of England Diocese of Bath and Wells ☩

April 2022

A time of hope

After two years of living with a pandemic, churches across Somerset are preparing for what is hoped to be a return to marking Holy Week in a more usual way.

For the newly designated Taunton Minster, St Mary Magdalene, it will be the first it marks as a Minster, and for its vicar, Tobie Osmond, it will be the first full Holy Week during which he can welcome people to the church in person since taking up the post more than two years ago.

He says, "I am sure I am not alone in feeling that it will be good to have somewhat close to a 'normal' Holy Week, even though it won't be completely the same as prior to the pandemic. After various services and activities throughout the week we'll be having a sunrise service on Easter Sunday at 6am, followed by breakfast, and I am sure Easter eggs will feature in our service later in the morning. It will still be a hybrid offering as there are some who still feel unable to return to church, which is completely understandable, and it is important they can still join



with us online."

While a return to 'normal' is the hope, Tobie also recognises the positives from the changes wrought by the pandemic. He says, "By sharing our services online we are also able to reach out to people not just in Taunton, but around the world. We regularly have people join us from Zambia, our partner diocese, also Canada, South Africa and Australia."

The church was formally designated as a Minister by Bishop Ruth on Sunday, 13 March. She said, "This new designation comes when Taunton, like the rest of the UK, is dealing with the challenge of recovering from the Covid pandemic, but it is also a time of hope and positivity for the future."

Find out what other churches are doing at bathandwells.org.uk ■

News in brief

Prayers & support for Ukraine

Churches across Bath and Wells have been praying for Ukraine and for peace. Many are open for those who wish to have a quiet moment of prayer or to light a candle, others have been holding prayer vigils. Locally church communities are working closely with aid agencies to raise money and support those in need in Ukraine and refugees from the conflict, including St Mary's Bridgwater and St John's, Yeovil. Bath Abbey showed a very visible sign of support, lighting up in blue and yellow ■



Steeplejacks assess the damage

View from the top

Work is underway to repair the spire of St Thomas', Wells. The church hit the headlines when two and a half metres of the spire plus its two and a half metre long weather vane came down during Storm Eunice.

Revd Claire Towns saw the whole thing. She said, "We were just really shocked this happened, but equally feel very thankful that nobody was hurt" ■

Platinum celebrations

From 2 to 5 June this year we will celebrate Her Majesty, The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

HOPE Together is working with others to help churches mark the occasion and, in particular, to celebrate the Queen's 70 years of faith and service. There are a range

of ideas and resources provided for communities, schools, churches and youth organisations. A website celebrating the Queen's faith and service focuses on six ways to mark the occasion; celebrate, sing, gift, learn, service and invite. Find out more at theplatinumjubilee.com ■

Hope in turbulent world

I write this on Ash Wednesday, a day when we begin a period of reflection and penitence, and remember our mortality. Those of us receiving the ash crosses on our foreheads today will hear these words: 'Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return...'

We have been invited us to set this Ash Wednesday aside to pray for peace in Ukraine. It would be easy for us to point the finger at those we hold responsible for such atrocity and yet we need to recognise that all of us carry responsibility for our own failures to live as peacemakers and reconcilers. Not one of us is perfect and Lent offers us an opportunity for honest realism and a chance to repent and seek forgiveness.

As you read this we will be approaching the end of Lent, and Easter will be in sight. Much will have happened in the world since I wrote it. Two years ago, I was praying for the world caught up in the early throes of a pandemic. Who could have known that we would still be living with the virus and how much life would have changed? Today I am joining in the prayer and fasting for countries at war. Where will we be as we enter Holy week and approach

Easter? What might be the outcome for Ukraine, Russia, ourselves?

And yet that is the very heart of faith. We do not know what the future holds but we do know the One who holds us. The fact is that God so loved the world that when He sees us in our greatest need, at our most threatened, He comes to be with us. To share the pain and give Himself fully, even to the point of death. And the story of Easter tells us that death is not the end. That life is found through the death of the Saviour.

I don't know what your experience of these last couple of years has been. I expect many of us carry the scars of loss. Pain and death are not things we can avoid. And neither did Christ. The hope He offers us is that they are not the end of the story but rather the beginning. Hope can be ignited and life restored through the faithful following in the footsteps of the One who loves us.

It does not mean that all will be wonderful. It won't stop wars. But it does mean that hope, forgiveness and new starts can be found as we look to follow Christ's example.

+ *Ron Tanton*

A uniting faith

Andrew Avramenko, a curate at St Stephen's & St Mary's, Bath who has Ukrainian connections, reflects on hope in challenging times.



Andrew and his family at a rally for Ukraine in Bath

What's the Ukrainian connection?

My father is Ukrainian. His parents survived the Holodomor, a forced famine in the 1930s by Stalin that aimed to wipe out Ukrainian identity - over 7 million died. They escaped from Stalin's forces and from the Nazis when my father was a young child. They travelled across Europe on foot before being welcomed as refugees into the UK. I also have connections with both the Anglican and Orthodox Ukrainian churches.

Is faith important to Ukrainians?

Faith is very much part of the Ukrainian identity and their way of living. On social media you can see people praying and holding services in underground shelters, in

underpasses and even in front of a church while warning sirens sound. Ukrainians are asking for prayers, not just for themselves but also for Russians, and have been deeply touched and encouraged by them.

Is faith a support in challenging times?

Faith is a very active thing that strengthens us, unites us and calls us to a better way, a peaceful way, out of this. It helps us to see people as human rather than a label, even our enemies. It unites us with people around the world, bringing us together in such a way that we couldn't do in many other ways.

How does conflict affect your faith?

If anything it strengthens my faith. I came to faith in part due to the last war in Europe, in Yugoslavia, and took aid to refugees. Although we may feel powerless, we do have the power to act; just as we have the power to do evil, we have the chance to do good and replace hate with love.

Read the full interview at:

bathandwells.org.uk/a-uniting-faith

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