

POSTLEBURY NEWSLETTER

April 2024

From the Rectory:

I write this as the Rector of Liverpool announces he is leaving the Church to work for a charity, stating that his decision to step down is rooted in his conviction that the Church perpetuates bias and discrimination based on race, gender, and sexuality. His resignation comes amid ongoing debates within the Church of England regarding its stance on same-sex relationships. While the General Synod approved blessings for same-sex couples last year, the issue remains contentious, in the light of existing doctrine that prohibits gay marriage and clergy from entering same-sex civil marriages.

The Church of England, like many religious institutions, grapples with many challenges like these in our contemporary world. A pressing issue is the decline in attendance and engagement among its members. Over the years, the Church has experienced a steady decrease in congregational participation, with many churches facing a real struggle to maintain membership in an increasingly secular society. The shift towards a more individualistic and diverse society has led to a disconnection between traditional religious practices and the preferences of a modern population.

Another significant challenge has grown regarding issues of inclusivity and diversity within the Church. The Church of England has faced criticism for its stance on matters of race, and LGBTQ+ rights, as it did over the ordination of women to the priesthood. But these debates cause serious internal divisions, testing the Church's ability to steer through a path that respects its tradition while responding to evolving public norms. Clergy and laity on both sides of the debate are drifting away from the Church because of it.

Financial constraints pose another problem. The Church relies on financial contributions from its members, and declining attendance greatly affects its sources of income. This financial strain limits the Church's activity and its capacity to fund clergy posts and maintain its historic buildings, all of which naturally accelerates decline.

But this is what the Church of England looks like for those who are mostly outside it. There is also the Church on the ground, whose faith leads many volunteers to manage playgroups, food banks, bereavement groups, advice centres and drop-in cafes; the church that visits the sick, cares for the lonely, educates many of our children, and through a variety of chaplaincies reaches into many areas of public life. This is the Church that is still very much valued and needs so much to be preserved, because- I believe- it is the church that our founder came to build.

Fr Anthony.

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

5th April (Friday)

1000 Nunney Holy Communion BCP (*David Gatcliffe*)

Sunday 7th April - 2nd Sunday of Easter/Low Sunday

0930 Wanstrow Holy Communion (*Graham Witts*)
1100 Leigh on Mendip Family Communion (*Graham Witts*)
1800 Stoke St Michael Evensong (*Jane Evans*)

11th April (Thursday)

1800 Wanstrow Compline & Meditation

12th April (Friday)

1000 Nunney Holy Communion BCP

Sunday 14th April - 3rd Sunday of Easter

0930 Stoke St Michael Holy Communion
1100 Witham Holy Communion
1800 Nunney Soul Food (*Henry Pomeroy*)

19th April (Friday)

1000 Nunney Holy Communion BCP

Sunday 21st April - 4th Sunday of Easter

0930 Marston Holy Communion BCP
1100 Stoke St Michael Family Communion
1800 Downhead Evensong

26th April (Friday)

1000 Nunney Holy Communion BCP

Sunday 28th April - 5th Sunday of Easter

0930 Nunney Morning Worship (*Felicity Evans*)
0930 Leigh on Mendip Holy Communion
1100 Cloford Holy Communion

Services taken by Reverend Anthony Dickson unless stated otherwise.

From the Registers - March 2024

Funerals:

5th March: Gladys Spencer, Mendip Crematorium

14th March: Peter Vicary, Stoke St Michael

22nd March: Ray Lambert, Stoke St Michael

Dates for Your Diary:

Note: Fr Anthony is on annual leave from 1st April - 8th April inclusive.

9th April: Postlebury APCM & PCC Meeting - 1930, Wanstrow Village Hall

23rd April: Leigh on Mendip with Downhead APCM

30th April: Stoke St Michael APCM

Praying for our Vacancy- please join us as we get together as a group of churches to pray for our Vacancy process- praying for Fr Anthony as he prepares to retire, as he and Christine start their new life; for us as we continue doing God's work in our communities, and as we seek our new vicar. Every 4th Sunday of the month at 1800, at different churches around the group. First meeting on 28th April, at Stoke St Michael. All members of the congregations welcome and encouraged to attend.

Warm space is taking place on the first and third Tuesday of each month, in Nunney Village Hall Community Room, with homemade soup, cakes and coffee and tea. All welcome between 1215 and 1400.

Wanstrow Church Chat cafe takes place on the second Tuesday of each month from 1000-1200. Hot drinks, teacakes and chat. All welcome.

Coffee and Chat at Stoke Church- takes place every Friday morning 1000 to 1200. All welcome to join us for a coffee, cake and a chat- come on your own, bring a friend, meet and catch up with old friends and make some new ones! More details available from Justine North- 01749 840412 / justine.north123@gmail.com or from the church website <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10959>

Life Groups meet fortnightly on Mondays in Nunney, Trudoxhill and Stoke (with an online option). Anyone is welcome to come along and you don't have to commit to the whole term. The courses we'll be using (The Bible Course, and Romans) are both high quality, clear and thought-provoking, suitable for anyone who is interested in exploring or deepening their faith. For more information contact nunneychurchwardens@gmail.com or justine.north123@gmail.com

Parish of Postlebury - Key Contacts

Priest-in-charge: Rev. Anthony Dickson, The Rectory, Nunney, Frome. BA11 4LZ
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PCC Secretary and Administrator: postleburysecretary@gmail.com

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

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dataprotectionpostlebury@gmail.com**