

POSTLEBURY NEWSLETTER

December 2023

From the Rectory:

Listening to a local radio station recently, I heard a DJ asking a caller how they were going to spend this Christmas. Up until this point the conversation had been quite cheerful, but the tone changed abruptly when the caller said something along the lines of- 'I won't be celebrating Christmas this year. It will be the first one without my beloved wife who passed away in May. Our kids live quite far away and have their own young families, and even if I was invited, I just couldn't face it.' And with that interview came to an end. It brought to mind the words of the song- 'It will be lonely this Christmas...'

If it's an exciting time for children, Christmas for grown-ups often evokes a nostalgia for times gone by, and this may bring sadness as well as joy. As we get older the Christmas period may be tinged with little sorrow, or even guilt or regret. The prayers of the Church recognise this, and among our prayers we pray especially for those who are living alone, perhaps for the first time.

More recently a phrase has been introduced praying for those 'who have no faith to support them in times of grief'. While expressing a sensitivity to some people's circumstances, it can sound rather dispiriting- as if this is a situation we must all simply accept. Certainly, seeing others celebrating can bring our personal grief into sharper focus, but it can also be a spur to search for greater understanding.

Christmas in our increasingly secular world carries a profound contradiction for those who -consciously or unconsciously- have removed 'Christ' and 'Mass' from Christmas. On one hand, the season retains its spiritual significance as a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, the foundation of Christianity, for those who have accepted the truth of this. On the other, the secular currents of the modern world dilute or overshadow the religious significance of the festival. This presents a unique challenge for those of us who are trying to maintain the sacred elements of the season, and the hope it expresses for humankind.

For me, the Christmas story is a yearly reminder that we are not alone; that God in Jesus Christ came into the world to share our human nature, and we can invite him to walk alongside us in our sorrows and in our joys.

Granted, for some 'it will be lonely this Christmas,' but it need not always be so.

Fr Anthony

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

1st December (Friday)

NO SERVICE

Sunday 3rd December - First Sunday of Advent

0930	Wanstrow	Holy Communion (<i>Malcolm Parr</i>)
1100	Leigh on Mendip	Family Communion (<i>Graham Witts</i>)
1230	Marston	Baptism - William Colville-Open
1800	Stoke St Michael	Advent Carol Service (<i>Jane Evans</i>)

5th December (Tuesday)

1800	Wanstrow	Evensong BCP (<i>Malcolm Parr</i>)
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8th December (Friday)

1000	Nunney	Holy Communion BCP
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Sunday 10th December - Second Sunday of Advent

0930	Stoke St Michael	Holy Communion
1100	Witham	Holy Communion

12th December (Tuesday)

1800	Wanstrow	Evensong BCP (<i>Malcolm Parr</i>)
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14th December (Thursday)

1800	Wanstrow	Compline & Meditation
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15th December (Friday)

1000	Nunney	Holy Communion BCP
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Sunday 17th December - Third Sunday of Advent

0930	Marston	Holy Communion
1100	Stoke St Michael	Family Carol Service
1500	Leigh on Mendip	Carol Service
1800	Witham	Carol Service

18th December (Monday)

1900	Cloford	Candlelit Carol Service
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21st December (Thursday)

1800	Wanstrow	Evening Prayer (<i>Malcolm Parr</i>)
1800	Nunney	Carol Service (<i>Henry Pomeroy</i>)

22nd December (Friday)

1000	Nunney	Holy Communion BCP
1800	Downhead	Carol Service

23rd December (Saturday)

1500 Nunney Crib Service (*Henry Pomeroy*)
1700 Wanstrow Lessons & Carols

Sunday 24th December - Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve

1600 Stoke St Michael Crib Service (*Chris North*)
1830 Marston Nine Lessons & Carols
2330 Witham Midnight Mass
2330 Stoke St Michael Midnight Mass (*Chris North*)

25th December (Monday) - Christmas Day

1000 Leigh on Mendip Holy Communion
1000 Nunney Holy Communion/Morning Worship (*Chris & Sally Foster*)
1000 Stoke St Michael Holy Communion (*Chris North*)

29th December (Friday)

NO SERVICE

30th December (Saturday)

TBC Marston Wedding - George Pullen & Charlotte Patterson
(*Graham Witts*)

Sunday 31st December - First Sunday of Christmas

1000 Nunney Holy Communion (*Chris & Sally Foster*)

Services taken by Revd. Anthony Dickson unless stated otherwise.

From the Registers - November 2023

Baptism:

18th November, Wanstrow: Evie May Carpenter

Confirmations: 4th November, Wells Cathedral: Theo Sackett, Bethany Johnson, Amelia Masters, Matilda Masters, Olivia Masters

Funerals:

3rd November, Mendip Crematorium and Nunney: Bette Bullus

14th November, Stoke St Michael: Donald Higgins

15th November, Haycombe Crematorium and Nunney: Barbara Woodland

Events for your diary:

Christmas Tree Festival: 1100-1600 on Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th December in St Giles Church, Leigh on Mendip raising funds for Friends of Leigh Church. Light lunches and refreshments served all day.

A Music Festival Anne Dalgety invites you to come and see “A Music Festival” performed by the Enterprise Players (cast of people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities) at 1900 on Friday 15th December in Nunney Village Hall. This showing will include canapes and wine. If anybody can help with food, please contact annedalgety@gmail.com.

Little Saplings Carers and Tots group, run by the Parish of Postlebury, has resumed and takes place on Wednesdays at 0930 in Nunney Village Hall. All welcome. Voluntary donation of £3 per family. Free refreshments are provided.

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.north@btinternet.com.

A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land is being organised by Revds. David Gatcliffe and Liz Dudley of this Deanery for September next year. Information Leaflets will be available in our Churches or if you are interested you can visit www.lightline.org.uk for more information.

Parish of Postlebury - Key Contacts

Priest-in-charge: Rev. Anthony Dickson, The Rectory, Nunney, Frome. BA11 4LZ
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PCC Hon Treasurer: Mr Steve Elliott - treasurerpostlebury@gmail.com

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