

## POSTLEBURY NEWSLETTER

January 2023

### **From the Rectory:**

A big thank you to all who left cards and gifts in our Rectory porch over the Christmas period. It is all much appreciated, and Christine I were touched by people's thoughtfulness and generosity. Christmas in 2022 was quite a contrast to last year's somewhat muted celebrations when the Covid 19 pandemic was still hovering around us, and folk were-perhaps rightly- still being cautious.

Only a few weeks before this Christmas a news report of a recent survey from the Office of National statistics showed that Christian affiliation had dropped from 59 % to 46% in the ten years since 2011: the first time it has dropped below 50%. The statistics showed there has been a corresponding rise in 'other religions.' But the greatest increase was in those who professed *no* religion: from 14.1 million in 2011 to 22.2 million in 2021.

This rise does not seem to have been reflected in the numbers at our various Christmas services, from which one might infer that Christianity - certainly in the countryside- is still as strong as ever. True, as with other social gatherings, recent attendances may be due to a 'bounce back' after COVID, but I wonder if there might be other reasons why the observance of Christmas has endured in a way that perhaps Easter and Pentecost (the other 'days of obligation'), have not.

Christmas tells us that God has become one of us at a time we need to hear this most. Look deeply into the original Gospel stories of Jesus' birth and there is nothing quaint or sweet about the first Christmas. Jesus has known our problems, pleasures and our pains. The festival reminds us that we live in two 'realms' -the earthly and the spiritual- and the two are not at all far apart.

The world is such that the only way human beings can understand spiritual things is if they are presented to us in physical form. We cannot understand them otherwise. The medium and the message are inseparable. We have to see it and we have to touch it, because this for us is reality. But *How* God comes into the world would seem to be equally important. Many ask "What is God? Who is God? Where and why is God so hidden to us?" God isn't at all obvious to most people. The mystery we celebrate at Christmas is saying that the divine has chosen an obscure place in the world, so that we will come looking for him, and make our own minds up about him. May you find him in this coming Year.

With every Blessing,  
Anthony

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

**1st January - New Year's Day**

0930 Wanstrow Holy Communion  
1100 Leigh on Mendip Family Communion

**6th January (Friday)**

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion BCP

**8th January - 1st Sunday of Epiphany**

09.30 Stoke St Michael Holy Communion  
11.00 Witham Family Communion  
18.00 Stoke St Michael Soul Food (*Chris North*)

**12th January (Thursday)**

1800 Wanstrow Compline & Meditation (*Malcolm Parr*)

**13th January (Friday)**

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion (BCP)

**15th January - 2nd Sunday of Epiphany**

0930 Nunney Holy Communion  
1130 Stoke St Michael Family Communion  
1800 Downhead Plough Sunday Evensong

**20th January (Friday)**

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion (BCP)

**22nd January - 3rd Sunday of Epiphany**

0930 Marston Holy Communion  
1100 Cloford Matins (*Jonathan Cheal*)

**27th January (Friday)**

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion (BCP)

**29th January - Candlemas**

1000 Stoke St Michael Holy Communion

*Services taken by Revd. Anthony Dickson unless stated otherwise.*

## From the Registers - December 2022:

### Funerals:

**1st December, Stoke St Michael:** Patricia Ann Vicary

**13th December, Nunney:** Marjery Thelma Applegate

**15th December, Stoke St Michael:** Colin Reece Middle

### Events for your diary:

**Saturday 28th January, Nunney Village Hall: Burns' Night Supper:** We are approaching the final leg of our fundraising for the Nunney Bells Augmentation Fund and what better way to do so and keep warm on a long dark evening than to have a fun time with all things Scottish - Burns' Night - haggis, neeps, tipsy laird (trifle), music and dancing, and maybe a wee dram or two of whiskey. We had a very successful Burns Night Supper before lockdown and we are looking forward to repeating the experience. Tickets are available from Mary Hooper on 07732 948311 and Roger Bryant on 01373 836154. Come and join us!

**Coffee and Chat Mornings** continue at Stoke St Michael from 1000-1200 each Friday. These will be weekly warm spaces.

**Little Saplings Carers and Tots group** in Nunney Village Hall, 0930 every Wednesday morning.

**Llangasty Retreat.** This will take place on 19th-21st April. Please be in touch with Fr Anthony at [nunneyrectory@gmail.com](mailto:nunneyrectory@gmail.com) if you would like to know more. A small deposit will be required in the New Year to secure a place.

## 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](mailto:Nunney.rectory@gmail.com) (day off is Monday).

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

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