**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)**

**19.00 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**

**9.30 Wanstrow** Holy Communion

**10.00 Stoke St Michael** Family Communion *Rev C North*

**10.30 Nunney** All Age Service *Lay Led*

**11.00 Leigh on Mendip** Holy Communion

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

**10.00 Nunney** Holy Communion (BCP)

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***2nd* January - Epiphany**

**09.30 Wanstrow** Holy Communion *TBC*

**11.00 Leigh-on-Mendip** All Age Service *TBC*

**18.00 Stoke St Michael** Evensong *Jane Evans*

*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. www.marstonmusic.co.uk

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

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

(day off is Monday).

**PCC Secretary and Administrator:** postleburysecretary@gmail.com

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