

Bruton Pitcombe Redlynch Brewham Wyke Champflower Shepton Montague



At the time of writing, I am very much hoping that Spring will soon arrive and we will enjoy some warm sunshine after all the recent rain and cold. On one of the rare sunny days in March, in a fit of misguided optimism, we sowed some vegetable seeds. Ever since, I have felt slightly guilty, thinking of them shivering in the still, cold soil as the sleet lashes down above them. I hope they survive and eventually germinate and grow.

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The Easter season is also a good time to think about germination and growth in our church communities. Christianity is a religion not of stasis, but of dynamism as we seek actively to follow the way of Jesus, to grow in faith, and to play our part in bringing in God's kingdom. The central offer that Jesus makes to us is not that we should sit around waiting for his second coming, but that we should live lives full of hope, joy and love: 'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly' (John 10: 10).

So the question for us is: where do we sense that abundance of life in our church communities? Where do we sense the dynamism and growth? God's Spirit is always active: encouraging, provoking, and empowering God's people to live as people of God's kingdom. I often hear people worry, not unreasonably, about the fact that we are not seeing people join our church communities. If we want our churches to thrive and grow, we need to be open to the possibilities of the new. If we wish to live abundantly, we need to live and love dynamically.



If you have something to contribute to a future edition of this newsletter, do please send it to the Rector at the benefice office address.

Easy-to-follow details of how to receive this newsletter by email can be found on the St Mary's website (www.stmarysbruton.org), or email benefice@stmarysbruton.org. If you are aware of someone who might like to receive it but does not use email, please consider printing a copy yourself and delivering it to them.

News from our Parishes



During Holy Week, St Mary's was very fortunate to host an artwork by Sandra Porter RWA 'The Stations of the Cross', pictured left, which served as a very thought-provoking aid to prayer.

The Film Night at St Peter's this month (11 April) will be the multi-award-winning film *Oppenheimer*, starting at 7.30pm.

Harry the Donkey, from Mill on the Brue, made a star appearance at the Palm Sunday service at St Mary's, to the delight of all those who were there.

The talk by John Crace which was to take place at St Mary's sadly had to be postponed due to illness. We are waiting to hear about a new date.

Loo and Servery Project

After many years of hard work, we are finally able to launch the St Mary's Amenities Project which aims to provide servery and toilet facilities in the church.

We are launching the project on Saturday April 13 at 1.30pm. We will have the architectural drawings of the new facilities, and mock-ups of what the new work will look like.

You will have a chance to talk through the designs with the PCC and witness the start of the biggest project undertaken by St. Mary's since the restoration during the 19th century.

Then, at 5.00pm, join us for a fantastic concert featuring music from every century since the church we see today was completed.

For more information visit www.stmarysbruton.org

Visit from Bruton Parish Church



We had the great joy of welcoming to St Mary's two visitors from Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg, Virginia. They knew of previous visits by members of their congregation and their Rector and they were thrilled to visit Bruton and especially St Mary's. Their church choir will be touring the

UK soon and we extended an invitation to them to come and sing here, but it may be that their schedule does not permit that this time. It was lovely to be able to rekindle this very special relationship

Voluntary / Involuntary, Part 1

Our organist at St Mary's writes:

Congratulations to Sarah Mills and Angela Pearce who both correctly identified the composer Gustav Mahler as the musician who said "Tradition is fanning the flames, not worshipping the ashes". A prize is on the way. Now a similar but easier question of identity. Who said: "The closing organ voluntary is almost always the best piece of music at a service: the hardest to play; the most carefully chosen; the most fastidiously practised; and the least listened to"? No prizes: it was the present writer, voicing frustrations which must have been felt for generations by organists far more accomplished than himself. Since January this year I have kept a record of six closing voluntaries played at St Mary's. Five of the six were, in my opinion, the best music in the service – I should know! Three of the six were carefully chosen for a particular Sunday, for example *Marches des Rois Mages* (March of the Three Kings) by Dubois for Epiphany. Most of these pieces needed practice, out of respect for the composer, and the listeners, if any. One or two people sometimes stay to listen, (the most loyal being Katie Mills, to whom my gratitude is due), though the absence of reaction from other quarters is disappointing.

The need to know more of the history of the organ voluntary and its *raison d'être* provided a splendid excuse to turn to my favourite book,

The Oxford Companion to Music, a school prize awarded in 1968 (!) This is definitely my choice for the desert island, totally eclipsing the appeal of the Bible or works by Shakespeare. A single-volume music encyclopedia of 1195 pages in small print, with many black & white plates, it is the work of just one man: Percy Scholes, clearly a dedicated musical polymath. The delight of this weighty tome is not just that it will fill to overflowing any gaps in your musical knowledge, but that it will surprise and intrigue you with the most outlandish entries. Opening the book at random (p. 146) I come across CALATHUMPIAN CONCERT; see CHARIVARI. (Where on earth did you dig up that gem, Percy?); CALCUTTA; see CLUBS. (The mind boggles); CALDERON DE LA BARCA; see references under ZARZUELA! If you read the articles and follow up the cross-references you will be delayed and entertained for so long that you'll forget what you originally intended to look up, which was – oh yes, I remember – VOLUNTARY!

It would seem from the scholarly article in the Companion that since the 17th century the word *voluntary* was synonymous with *extemporisation* or *improvisation*. The player would have the freedom to play what he wanted, without reference to a printed score. The musicologist Charles Burney defined the voluntary as 'a piece played by a musician *extempore*, according to his fancy'. Improvisation remains an important resource for the organist, particularly at cathedrals where the level of musicianship is such that it is hard to believe that the organist is engaged in spontaneous composition, not reading from a printed score. But the word 'voluntary' was also used for written and printed music from as early as the time of Henry Purcell, who wrote a Voluntary on the 100th Psalm Tune.

Reform of the Parish Share

A written response to the consultation on the proposed reform of parish share (see previous issues of this Newsletter for details of the proposals) has been submitted and shared with all PCCs. There is due to be a second round of consultation, leading to a discussion and vote at Diocesan Synod on 2 July.

Packhorse Fair

The Packhorse Fair returns to Bruton this year on 27 May, after a long absence. St Mary's and the Friends of St Mary's will run some stalls to raise funds, in lieu of a separate summer fete. Please do support this event if you can.

Prayer Ministry



We invite you to pray every day.

In the morning...

Dear God, help me to notice you today: in the people I am with and in the world around me. Be my guide in all that I am, say and do. Amen

In the evening....

Be still with God and reflect on the day. Romans 8:28 says 'We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.'

Most of the above is from the Diocese of Bath and Wells website.

Bruton Choral Society

BRUTON CHORAL SOCIETY

Musical Director: Barbara Jenkinson

Now is the Month of Maying

An early summer soirée
of light choral music

with Angela Ashworth, Geoff Allan,
Clare Sydenham & Ashley Marshfield

Saturday 11 May 6.00pm
Music School, King's Bruton

Tickets £10 advance/£12 on the door
to include a glass of wine

from Bruton Convenience Store, Bruton Pharmacy,
01749 812281 or www.brutonchoralsociety.org.uk

After our very enjoyable and rousing collaboration with King's School, Bruton, on Rutter's *Feel The Spirit*, we have returned to the baton of Barbara Jenkinson and are now preparing for our final concert of this year's choral season. On Saturday 11 May the choir will be performing in the Queen Elizabeth Music School at King's at 6pm – do please take note of the earlier than usual time.

We are calling this early evening soirée event 'Now is the Month of Maying'. The music will cover a range of musical styles, including jazz, barbershop and popular numbers, and the concert will feature our regulars – Angela Ashworth, Geoff Allan, Clare Sydenham, and Ashley Marshfield. The emphasis will be on light-hearted entertainment with wine being served in the interval, hopefully *à fresco!*

Tickets will be £10 if bought in advance, £12 on the door, and will include a glass of wine or soft drink. They will be available from Bruton Convenience Store, Bruton Pharmacy (01749 812281), or online from www.brutonchoralsociety.org.uk.

Bruton Choral Society
Quiz Night
Friday 26 April 7.30pm
Bruton Community Hall



Tickets £10 to include a light buffet supper
from 01749 813976
Groups, singles, pairs, all welcome!

And on a social note we will be holding a Quiz Night on 26 April at 7.30pm in Bruton Community Hall: these have become a fixture in our calendar and are always lively and enjoyable.

Tickets must be bought in advance from 01749 813976, £10 to include a light buffet supper. Groups, pairs, singles, all welcome!

Have a look at our website www.brutonchoralsociety.org.uk for further details about our activities or follow us on our new Instagram account or on Facebook.



Holy Trinity, Wyke Champflower Anniversary

On 19 May at 11.00 am, we will hold a special service at Holy Trinity, Wyke Champflower to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the re-consecration of the chapel by the then Bishop of Bath & Wells on 18 July 1624. The current Bishop of Bath & Wells will be with us and will preside at a service of Holy Communion on what promises to be a very special occasion in the life of the chapel and those who worship there.

Arts Events



Placeme(a)nt: a show of monoprints by Benet Haughton

6 Bruton High St, 2–12 May

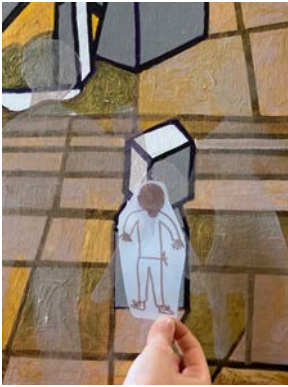
St Peters Redlynch, 18–30th May

Benet Haughton is a painter resident in Edinburgh and recently making monoprints. The show is called Placeme(a)nt – a play on place and commitment coming out of the lockdown in 2020–21. Having spent hours drawing in his garden, these monoprints are an expression of that time. He will be making new work in No6 and in St Peter's, Redlynch.

benethaughton@gmail.com,
07840 598 901

The Stations of the Resurrection at St Mary's Church Bruton

April 22nd-25th, 2024



A collection of original paintings by the American artist Richard Caemmerer will be exhibited between 8.30 and 4pm.

There is a booklet of the Stations with prayers to follow individually and a guided mediation on Wednesday 24th at 2pm.

More information: The 22 images depict the appearances of Jesus to his friends after the resurrection – from the earthquake recounted by Matthew, to the encounter with Saul on the Road to Damascus. Engaging with art has the potential to open up fresh ways of seeing the story. Whilst the Stations of the Cross are well known, the Stations of the Resurrection are sometimes overlooked and offer a rich journey through the 50 days of Easter. Each one invites responses in the viewer and asks how and where we might meet the risen Christ today.

For more information or if you would like to host the Stations of the Resurrection in your Church in the future please contact Rev'd Gill at: revgill.sheptonmallet@gmail.com

Diary Dates

- 4 April – Roman Catholic Mass, St Mary's at 10.00 am
- 11 April – Film Night at Shepton Montague, St Peter's at 7.30 pm
- 13 April – Launch event for loo & servery project at St Mary's, with Concert at 5.00 pm
- 15 April – Friends of St Mary's meeting, Drystone House at 5.30 pm
- 16 April – Shepton Montague Annual Meetings, village hall at 6.30 pm
- 17 April – Bruton Annual Meetings, St Mary's at 5.30 pm
- 22–26 April – Stations of the Resurrection exhibition at St Mary's
- 22 April – Brewham Annual Meetings, St John's at 7.00 pm
- 26 April – Pitcombe Annual Meetings, St Leonard's at 6.00 pm

Further ahead

- 2 May – Roman Catholic Mass, St Mary's at 10.00 am
- 7 May – Shepton Montague PCC meeting, Village Hall at 6.30 pm
- 8 May – Bruton PCC meeting, Plox meeting room at 5.30 pm
- 9 May – Deanery Ascension Day service, Milborne Port at 7.30 pm
- 9 May – Film Night at Shepton Montague, St Peter's at 7.30 pm
- 10 May – Thanksgiving service for Kathleen Apperly, St Leonard's, 12.00 noon
- 17 May – Pitcombe PCC meeting, Hadspen Farm at 2.30 pm
- 19 May – Special 400th anniversary service at Wyke Champflower at 11.00 am.
- 25 May – Plant sale and teas at St Peter's Shepton Montague, all day.
- 27 May – Packhorse Fair in Bruton, all day

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St. Mary's Amenities Project

Fundraiser & Information Day

Sat 13 April – 1.30pm

Gala Concert
5.00pm

**Choral and instrumental music from
the 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th
and 21st centuries.**

