



Bruton Pitcombe Redlynch Brewham Wyke Champflower Shepton Montague



When Diocesan Synod meets on 10 July, it will be asked to approve the proposals for reform of parish share that have been the subject of consultation during the course of this year. If the proposals are implemented in their current form, which seems likely, it will result in the amount of contributions to the Common Fund

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requested from this benefice (i.e. the aggregate of our parish share payments across all our parishes) increasing very substantially.

If you have been following the development of these proposals, you will know that at the heart of them lies the principle (which is new) that each benefice should pay for the cost of the paid ministry it receives (i.e. in our case, the Rector), plus a contribution to central Diocesan costs, plus a contribution to a support fund to provide financial support for parishes in economically deprived (poorer) areas. At the moment, we pay only around half that cost and the remainder is paid out of the parish share payments made by other parishes in the Diocese (i.e. we are subsidised by other parishes).

The change gives rise to (at least) three big questions for our PCCs to consider: how should we apportion the new benefice share among our parishes; by how much can we increase our giving to the Common Fund; what happens if we don't pay in full?

The benefice council will meet to discuss this issue in late July, and it will then need to be discussed by each PCC.

At present, there is a shortfall in Common Fund contributions from parishes and this is being met by using Diocesan reserves and the sale of housing stock (vicarages etc). But the reserves and supply of excess housing are forecast to run out at the end of 2025. At that point, it would appear, either the level of giving to the Common Fund will need to have increased so that we can continue to pay for the current number of clergy, or we will have to make further reductions in the number of paid clergy. It is not clear how or where or when

this would be done. The option, advocated by many people, of asking the Church Commissioners to release some of their central funds to meet the costs of parish clergy does not seem to be finding favour.

The problem can be stated simply: as a benefice, we are currently reliant on subsidy from other parishes to pay the costs of having a full-time, paid Rector; that subsidy is going to end and we are expected to 'pay our way' in the future.

We now need to work out our solution to this problem.



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](http://www.stmarysbruton.org)), or email [benefice@stmarysbruton.org](mailto: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

On 13 June, St Mary's hosted a hustings for the General Election, which was well-attended both in person and online. There were some good questions and it was interesting to have the chance to meet our candidates.

The extension to the burial ground at St Leonard's Pitcombe was consecrated by Bishop Trevor Wilmott during a short service on 12

June and is now available for burials. Huge thanks are due to the Friends of St Leonard's and other donors who generously funded the purchase of the land and also to those who dealt with the conveyancing and obtaining planning permission.

Churchwardens across the benefice have attended the Archdeacon's Visitation and been sworn in for a year's service: we are very grateful to them for all that they give to the life of the Church here.

The Film Night showings at St Peter's will be *Wicked Little Letters* on Thursday 11 July, and *The Zone of Interest* on Thursday 8 August, both beginning at 7.30pm.

St Mary's hosted the first of two 'music and movement' sessions. These are times of singing and music with pre-school children, their parents or carers, and others. The idea is to make the event intergenerational. There will be another one on 11 July at 9.30am and all are welcome to come and join in. It would be wonderful if this leads to a more regular group for pre-school children.

The Rector will attend a meeting of the PCC of Bratton Seymour on 12 July to begin discussions with them about their integration into this benefice.

David Slater will be giving an organ recital at St Mary's on 13 September, 7.30pm, playing an exciting and immaculately-prepared selection of music featuring Yon, Franck, and 'Mystery Guests': composers' dates will be supplied, but the rest will be up to you! There will be a bar, an interval, a bit of brain work and plenty of

music. Tickets will be £10 on the door and all money raised will go towards the Loo & Served Project at St Mary's.

The folks at Pitcombe are having a Summer Party on July 13 from 1.30pm, Pitcombe Village Hall. There will be a buffet lunch, Pimms bar, live music, dog show and silent auction. Tickets £12, under 12s are free. Please email thartnell19@gmail.com.

Additionally the Friends of St Leonard's invite you to a Flower Festival – see below!

**Friends of St Leonard's invite you to a**

*Flower Festival*

**Saturday 14th to Sunday 15th September**

**2.30-4.30pm**

**Come and enjoy Afternoon Tea and flower displays in the tranquil surroundings of Pitcombe Village**

**All proceeds go towards maintaining our historic church**



## Rail Strikes, Part Two

***Our organist at St Mary's writes:***

We're still in Sri Lanka!

A railway line to Kataragama would be a boon to the thousands of pilgrims who otherwise travel there by bus for religious events. It's a rather sparsely populated area and I wonder if such a rail service would be viable except at important dates in the Buddhist calendar. I wonder too if the planned route of the new line would go via Hambantota Airport, also that also would probably be unprofitable. Hambantota International Airport, like the nearby International Cricket Stadium, was a fanciful project of the now discredited former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, who hailed from these parts. The airport is virtually non-operational – possibly under Chinese control – and as for the cricket ground I wouldn't be surprised if cattle now grazed on the hallowed turf. Unfortunately the railway extension has proved to be on a parallel with our own HS2: an ill-judged scheme dogged by financial problems. The new line only got half-way before the money ran out. (Sounds familiar?) I'd love to think that the final stretch to Kataragama will be completed in my lifetime, but I have my doubts. The terminus at least for the foreseeable future is an insignificant place with no tourist attractions called Beliatta.

I digress. Rail strikes. Just to enjoy the journey I travelled with a friend all the way to Beliatta, intending to return on the next train. The new line from Matara to Beliatta provides a splendid contrast

between the old and the new. Locomotives are mainly growling dinosaurs Which had already completed a lifetime of hard service on Canadian railways before being cascaded down (railway parlance) to Sri Lanka in the 1980s or earlier. The coaches, real bone-shakers, look even older. Doors and windows are fixed in the open position – a welcome source of ventilation in the heat, but if there is a sudden downpour...! In contrast, track work, signalling and every operational function are ultra-modern. Places no bigger than Bruton are served by grand stations, fully-staffed (over-staffed?), boasting three or four underused platforms and several underused sidings. Newly-built but traditional features abound: waiting rooms, toilets, buffet (probably closed), parcels office, separate 2nd and 3rd class ticket windows issuing proper chunky cardboard tickets. The Station Master, immaculate in a white uniform with gold braid and a smart peaked



*Photo: jeremy@pixelchrome.com*

cap is an imposing presence at the arrival and departure of every train. I was in seventh heaven as the train pulled into Beliatta Station. But my bliss vanished in an instant with the news that there would be no more trains owing to a wild-cat drivers' strike (presumably over pay). The ticket windows were immediately besieged by crowds of angry people who had bought tickets for their journey before the strike was announced and wanted a refund. For my friend and myself the priority was to get back home by any means possible: bus. So we hired the nearest three-wheeler to take us to the bus station where we found a bus to take us to Matara. There we changed to a bus for Galle, the major city in the south-west, and from there another one back to Aluthgama from where we'd started at 8am, arriving at 5.00pm, only about two hours late. I would never willingly go on a bus in Sri Lanka as they are hot and noisy and driven by reckless psychopaths. My friend was almost as scared as I was and probably spent the journey praying to Buddha for a quick and easy death. I held on to whatever I could, bit my lower lip, looked down at the floor and thought about, er, beer. We lived to tell the tale.

They say that lightning never strikes twice. Well, they are wrong. During my next holiday I undertook the same journey with the same friend. Exactly the same happened as described above on reaching Beliatta station. Our return journey by bus was a carbon copy of the previous one. On my most recent visit to Sri Lanka I decided against another train ride to Beliatta, not so much because I was concerned that lightning might strike thrice, but because I was aware of a



strange situation that had recently developed: it was cheaper to travel by train than by bus. As a result trains, always crowded in any case, had become mobile sardine-cans. At my age the prospect of forcing myself on board and being wedged upright for the entire journey with never a chance of a seat or even a view out of the window somehow lacked appeal. I seem to remember that I went to the beach.

## Sing-a-Ling

# Music and Movement at the Church

9.30-11am, 11th July  
St. Mary's Church, Bruton, FREE

Ages  
0-100  
Welcome!



Join us for an intergenerational  
Music and Movement session with  
Sing-a-ling!



# Prayer Ministry

## **Prayer for Our Community**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity between us. For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant us all to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

## **Prayer Opportunities**

At a prayer meeting every Wednesday Morning some of us meet to pray for our community, any one is welcome to join us. If you have any requests prayer, please send them to the Rector and he will advise us of the requests.

We now have a Prayer Request Box! This box will be cleared daily by our Rector, Jonathan, and all requests will be treated with extreme confidence.



## Confirmation

If anyone knows of anyone who might be interested in being confirmed this autumn, please ask them to get in touch with the Rector.

## Benefice Discussion Group

A short series is planned for September: two meetings to discuss the intriguing little book Jonah. The groups will meet at the Rectory on 2 and 9 September, with the choice of 3.00pm or 6.00pm.

## Shepton Montague Summer Fete

Saturday August 24 will see Shepton Montague hold their traditional village fete to be held at Higher Farm from 2.00pm, by kind permission of the Dimond family.

Most of the village residents will be involved with the day offering a range of stalls, entertainment and games for both adults and children.

Come and try your hand at the coconut shy or skittles. Sit and enjoy a cream tea in the garden setting. Pick out a treasure from the Bric-a-brac or book stall and win a bottle or two on the bottle stall. There will be a burger BBQ for the hungry, a bar for the thirsty, and ice creams for everyone.

You will be encouraged to buy tickets for the raffle, the prizes include dinner at The Newt, lunch at The Montague Inn and tickets for England vs Australia at Twickenham on 9 November.

There will be a chance to get close to birds of prey from Pitcombe Falconry, and sit in a vintage tractor and compare it with a modern tractor. All this while the children play on the bouncy castle and enjoy other games.

Please come and support this fun afternoon raising money for St Peter's Church and the Village Hall.

We have plenty of parking – just follow the signs – but please do *not bring your dogs*.

## St Leonard's, Pitcombe

On Thursday 17 October at 6 for 6.30pm we have Good Habits – an award-winning alt-folk duo – performing at St Leonard's, Pitcombe, in aid of the Friends of the church, thanks to the good offices of Take Art, a Somerset promoter of performances in towns and villages.

Bonnie Schwarz (cello + vocals) and Pete Shaw (accordion) mix vivid storytelling with eclectic sounds, drawing on their diverse musical tastes and weaving them into an action-packed narrative of folky goodness.

This will be an evening's entertainment for all ages. Admission will be £15 to include wine and nibbles; children under 12 will be admitted free.



**SHEPTON MONTAGUE PCC**

in association with

**SOMERSET MOVIOLA**

proudly presents

# **WICKED LITTLE LETTERS**

**2023/100 minutes/15**

A 1920s English seaside town is the setting for a dark, absurd scandal in this riotous mystery comedy. Based on a stranger-than-fiction true story, it follows two neighbours: deeply-conservative local Edith Swan (Olivia Colman) and rowdy Irish migrant Rose Gooding (Jessie Buckley). When Edith and other residents start to receive abusive letters full of unintentionally hilarious profanities, foul-mouthed Rose is charged with the crime. The case prompts a national uproar, and a trial ensues. However, as the town's women, led by Police Officer Gladys Moss (Anjana Vasan), begin to investigate the crime themselves, they suspect that something is amiss and Rose might not be the culprit after all. Director: Thea Sharrock.

**in St Peter's Church, Shepton Montague**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July**

**at 7.30pm**

*Doors open 7.00pm for drinks & snacks*

**Tickets: £7.00 (or 5 for £30)  
pay on the door with card  
or at the bar with cash**

*All proceeds go towards St Peter's Church*

*For more information please contact Sarah Maude on 01749 812 149*

**Visit our website at: [www.moviola.org](http://www.moviola.org)**



## Arts Events



We have a variety of engaging events coming up throughout July–September. A photography exhibition by Debora Barnes will be showing in Redlynch Chapel 11–28 July, and Gnostic Rebellion bring us psychedelic music on July 27. August sees a well-earned summer break in our events diary, but we return on Friday 13 September with an organ recital by David Slater. We follow that up on 21 September with folk duo Martin & Eliza

Carthy, and then on 25 September we host an evening with Poet Laureate Simon Armitage. Further ahead we welcome Oysterband to our venue in November. Watch our different spaces for updates!

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[www.stmarysbruton.org](https://www.stmarysbruton.org) [@st\\_marys\\_bruton](https://www.instagram.com/st_marys_bruton)

### **Martin & Eliza Carthy:**

<http://cabaretvoltairevents.com/event/martin-carthy-eliza-carthy-bruton/>

### **Simon Armitage:**

<http://cabaretvoltairevents.com/event/simon-armitage-poet-laureate/>

### **Oysterband:**

<http://cabaretvoltairevents.com/event/oysterband/>

# Organ Concert

 given by  
**David Slater**

FRIDAY 13 SEPTEMBER  
7.30pm, St Mary's, Bruton

## Jon Franck



## Mystery Quests

**£10 on the door • Bar • Interval**

# *Martin & Eliza Carthy*

Martin Carthy and his twice Mercury-nominated daughter Eliza Carthy join forces to perform an eclectic range of songs from their vast family

repertoire, drawing from the traditional canon as well the more contemporary.

Martin is a legendary ballad singer and guitarist who has influenced generations of artists, including Bob Dylan – with whom he shared an 80th birthday celebration in May 2021 – and Paul Simon, while Eliza has been twice-nominated

for the Mercury Music Prize and is a multiple-award winner at the BBC Radio Two Folk Awards.

Eliza is undoubtedly one of the most impressive and engaging performers of her generation. She has performed and recorded with a diverse array of artists including Paul Weller, Rufus and Martha Wainwright, Patrick Wolf and Bob Neuwirth. More than most, Eliza Carthy has revitalised folk music and captured the most hardened of dissenters with intelligent, charismatic and boundary-bending performances.

## *Tickets*

<http://cabaretvoltaireevents.com/event/martin-carthy-eliza-carthy-bruton/>



# *Simon Armitage*

Acclaimed poet and lyricist, Simon Armitage, grew up in West Yorkshire. A former probation officer, he is the recipient of numerous

prizes and awards, including the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry. He has published over a dozen poetry collections, including *Magnetic Field*, and the acclaimed medieval translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, which has sold over 100,000 copies.

Armitage also writes, records and performs with the band LYR and

has received an Ivor Novello Award for his song writing. His recent book *Never Good with Horses* features his song lyrics for the first time and celebrates his ear for the music of language. *Blossomise*, his new poetry collection, is a Sunday Times bestseller. He is also the author of two novels and three non-fiction bestsellers: *All Points North*, *Walking Home* and *Walking Away*. A regular broadcaster, Armitage presented the popular BBC Radio 4 series *The Poet Laureate has Gone to his Shed*. He also contributes to *Guy Garvey's Finest Hour* (BBC Radio 6 Music).



## *Tickets*

[www.cabaretvoltaireevents.com/event/simon-armitage-poet-laureate/](http://www.cabaretvoltaireevents.com/event/simon-armitage-poet-laureate/)

# OYSTERBAND

Legends on their last ever tour: from their earliest days as a noisy, politicised ceilidh band in the late Seventies, Oysterband have never stopped evolving or providing soundtracks to the changing times.

Emerging in the early 80s from their ceilidh band days they infused both the traditional and their own songs with a passion and energy



that was electrifyingly fresh for the time. Signing to new roots label Cooking Vinyl, headlining English Roots Against Apartheid, playing Glastonbury and the Fleadh several times each, touring with The Pogues in Europe and Billy Bragg in North America, and hosting the Big Session Festival, all gained them a large and loyal following both at home and internationally.

**Coming to St Mary's Church Saturday 9th November, 8.00pm.**

## TICKETS

<http://cabaretvoltairevents.com/event/oysterband/>

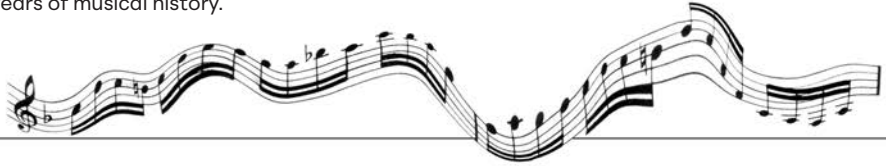
*Do you enjoy singing? Would you like a traditional musical education  
in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere?*

St Mary's has two choirs: the Adult Choir rehearses once a week (Tuesday evening) and performs one Sunday per month; the Children's Choir (ages 7–16) rehearses every Friday after school and also performs one Sunday per month.

The benefits of singing, particularly in a group, are well documented: from improving your memory, social skills and teamwork, through to reading, concentration, and even your mathematical abilities!

Our current choristers often attest to the way that singing allows them to leave the world behind and be transported into a place of serenity, a feeling which stays with them long after choir practice has finished.

If you think singing might be for you, contact the Choir Master to arrange to come along to a rehearsal, and who knows - maybe you'll be inspired to become part of a thousand years of musical history.



Contact the choir master (Harry Mills) at [choir@stmarysbruton.org](mailto:choir@stmarysbruton.org) for more information.



[www.stmarysbruton.org](http://www.stmarysbruton.org)

# Services in July & August

Parish	Sunday 7 July	Sunday 14 July	Sunday 21 July	Sunday 28 July
<b>Brewham</b>	<b>9.30am</b> Eucharist CW	—	<b>9.30am</b> Morning Prayer	—
<b>Bruton</b>	<b>8.00 am</b> Holy Communion (BCP) <b>11.00 am</b> Festival Eucharist (CW1)	<b>8.00 am</b> Holy Communion (BCP) <b>11.00 am</b> Eucharist (CW1)	<b>8.00 am</b> Holy Communion (BCP) <b>11.00 am</b> All Age Worship	<b>8.00 am</b> Holy Communion (BCP) 9.00 am Breakfast Service <b>11.00 am</b> Festival Eucharist (CW1)
<b>Pitcombe</b>	<b>11.00 am</b> Holy Communion (BCP)	<b>9.30 am</b> Holy Communion (BCP)	<b>11.00 am</b> Matins (BCP)	<b>6.00 pm</b> Evensong (BCP)
<b>Sh. Montague</b>	—	<b>6.00 pm</b> Evening Prayer (CW)	—	<b>9.30 am</b> Eucharist (CW1)
<b>Wyke Ch.</b>	—	—	<b>9.30 am</b> Holy Communion (BCP)	—

Sunday 4 August	Sunday 11 August	Sunday 18 August	Sunday 25 August
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**9.30am**  
Eucharist CW

—

**9.30am**  
Morning Prayer

—

**8.00 am**  
Holy Communion  
(BCP)

**8.00 am**  
Holy Communion  
(BCP)

**8.00 am**  
Holy Communion  
(BCP)

**8.00 am**  
Holy Communion  
(BCP)

**11.00 am**  
Sung Eucharist  
(CW1)

**11.00 am**  
Eucharist  
(CW1)

**11.00 am**  
All Age Worship

9.00 am  
Breakfast Service

**11.00 am**  
Eucharist  
(CW1)

**11.00 am**  
Holy Communion  
(BCP)

**9.30 am**  
Holy Communion  
(BCP)

**11.00 am**  
Matins (BCP)

**6.00 pm**  
Evensong (BCP)

—

**6.00 pm**  
Evening Prayer (CW)

—

**9.30 am**  
Eucharist (CW1)

—

—

**9.30 am**  
Holy Communion  
(BCP)

—

# Diary Dates

## July

- 4 • Roman Catholic mass, St Mary's, 10am
- 4 • Piano concert, St Mary's, 6pm
- 10 • Bruton PCC, Plox meeting room, 5.30pm
- 10 • Diocesan Synod, Flourish House, 6.30pm
- 11 • Sing-a-Ling, St Mary's, 9.30am
- 11 • Film Night at St Peter's, Shepton Montague, 7.30pm
- 11–28 • Debora Barnes Photography Exhibition, St Peter's, Redlynch, Wed–Fri 10am–3pm, Sat–Sun 10am–5pm
- 13 • Pitcombe Summer Party, Pitcombe Village Hall, 1.30pm
- 18 • Deanery Synod, West Camel, 7.30pm
- 22 • Brewham PCC meeting, Colinshayes, 7pm
- 27 • Gnostic Rebellion, St Mary's, 7.30pm
- 29 • Benefice Council meeting, Bruton Rectory, 5.30pm

## August

- 1 • Roman Catholic mass, St Mary's, 10am
- 8 • Film Night at St Peter's, Shepton Montague, 7.30pm
- 24 • Shepton Montague Summer Fete, Higher Farm, 2pm

## September

- 2 • Benefice discussion group, Rectory, 3pm and 6.30pm
- 7 • Male Voice Choir in Brewham, details TBC
- 9 • Benefice discussion group, Rectory, 3pm and 6.30pm

- 13 • Organ Recital, 7.30pm, St Mary's
- 14–15 • Flower Festival, 2.30–4.30pm, St Leonard's, Pitcombe
- 21 • Martin & Eliza Carthy, St Mary's, Bruton, 8pm
- 25 • Simon Armitage, St Mary's, Bruton, 8pm

## Contact

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