



Bruton Pitcombe Redlynch Brewham Shepton Montague Wyke Champflower Bratton Seymour



*Photo: Béla Bleier*

At around this time of year, every parish in the Church of England is required to prepare an annual report, reporting on the activities of the Church in that parish, to be approved by the PCC and then presented to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. Like many things in the Church of England, the underlying rationale for the rule, or practice, has

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become out of touch with the current reality. Just as the Incumbent is supposed to ring the church bell every day immediately before saying the Daily Office in the parish church, morning and evening, so as to notify the entire population of the parish that it is time to come to church to say prayers together, so the reason for preparing an Annual Report can feel a bit pointless.

The idea is that the report is made available to all the parishioners who are on the parish electoral roll when they attend the annual meeting. It gives them a summary report of everything that the parish Church community has been doing. The reality is, that with a few exceptions, often the only people who attend the annual meeting are the members of the PCC. They already know what the Church community has been doing, because they are the ones who have done it, or overseen it. The other parishioners who are on the electoral roll but who are not themselves members of the PCC, if there are any, seldom attend the meeting. So the report, painstakingly prepared in order to comply with the legal duties of the PCC, can feel like a pointless formality, a bit like tolling the church bell daily at 8.00 am and 5.00 pm.

It would be possible to get a bit grumpy about this. But there is another possible reaction, admittedly a more challenging one.

If we take it as a given that the twin purposes of a Church community are to love God and to love our neighbours (see Mark 12:30-31 and Matthew 22:36-40), then what would the annual report need to

contain in order for our neighbours to want to come to the annual meeting and read it? Put slightly differently, if what we currently do all year does not lead to people wanting to hear more about what we are up to and join in, then what should we be doing instead?



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

### **Breaking Bread – 22nd March**

Breaking Bread is a new community enterprise, offering a low cost healthy meal cooked and served by volunteers, with all profits going to a charity feeding people in countries where there is famine. Last year's Breaking Bread event raised £900 for World Central Kitchen's project in Gaza, which was feeding people during Eid. We are currently planning a meal for Sudan which will take place on 22nd March in

the Community Hall, time to be confirmed. We are working with a Sudanese lady in Bristol who has a business cooking traditional food for events and food markets – she might not be able to cook for the actual event, but she is definitely going to give us a cookery lesson and help us create a Sudanese menu for the night.

### **Training**

This month, the Rector will be attending two information / training sessions run by our Diocese. One is about the Diocesan strategy for rural ministry: how might we seek to thrive in small communities and what does the route to thriving look like? The other is about finance: as a Diocese, what are we going to do about the fact that we are living beyond our means, with our total income falling way short of our costs? Feedback from these sessions will be provided to PCCs. These are important questions and it will be very interesting to learn what the thinking is within the central Diocesan team and among other parishes like ours.

### **Baptism**

We held a baptism by full immersion at St Mary's on 19th January when a student from Sexey's school was baptised – an interesting and joyous occasion for all concerned (if very cold for the candidate).

### **Christmas Services**

Attendance at all our Christmas services across the benefice was strong this year, which is very encouraging.

### **Dusk is Dangerous**

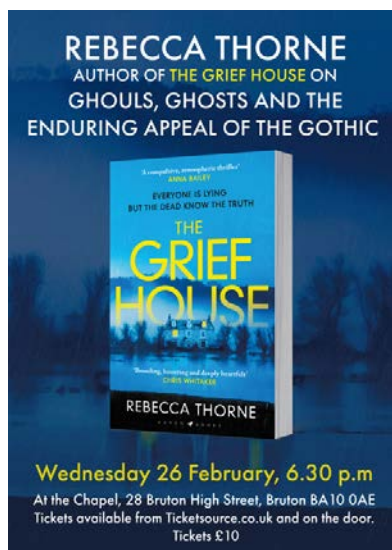
Now that the New Year is behind us, I would like to make a plea to walkers, walkers with children, walkers with dogs and joggers (as

well as some bicyclists who have insufficient lighting) as you may not realise that you are often invisible on the unlit country lanes.

- Please wear at least a reflective strip, but even better a high visibility jacket
- Please walk facing the traffic if safe, as recommended by the Highway Code, which makes it easier for drivers to see you and for you to notice oncoming traffic, particularly now that many modern cars make little or no noise
- Please keep your child or dog on your inside, closest to the edge of the lane, as this is safer

Another request for any time of day or night: please don't cross the road behind a car that is reversing into a parking space. The driver has to look front and back when manoeuvring and may not see you.

*Let's keep each other safe! Sarah Maude*



## Friends of St Mary's

Wednesday 26th February welcomes the author of *The Grief House* – Rebecca Thorne – to Bruton for a talk entitled *Ghouls, Ghosts and the enduring appeal of the Gothic*.

At the Chapel, Bruton, BA10 0AE 6.30 for 7pm.

**Tickets:** <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/bruton/>

## Shepton Montague Film Nights

Thank you all for your support in 2024 and we look forward to welcoming you to the 2025 season of films, starting in February.

Thursday 13th February Shepton Montague Film Night

**THE CRITIC** (2023/95 minutes/15) in St Peter's Church, 7.00 for 7.30pm. Director: Anand Tucker

*It is advisable to bring a cushion!*

For more information, please contact Sarah Maude:

01749 812149

sarahjmaude@btinternet.com.

Set in 1930s London, *The Critic* revolves around a feared theatre critic named Jimmy Erskine (Ian McKellen), his loyal assistant, a newspaper owner (Mark Strong) who wants to get rid of the critic, and an actress (Gemma Arterton) who has been devastated by his excoriating theatrical reviews. The critic's determination to survive ensures that the other characters are caught in a web of blackmail, deceit and murder.

## Electoral Roll Renewal

This year, every parish needs to renew its electoral roll. The existing roll is discarded and an entirely new roll created. This means that anyone who wishes to be on the electoral roll must apply to have their name entered on the new roll – there is no automatic carry-over of names from the existing roll to the new roll: if you don't complete an application form and submit it in time, you will drop off the roll.

Being on the electoral roll is a good way to participate in the life of your parish church. It enables you to attend the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, to vote for elected PCC members and to stand for election yourself.

Please keep an eye out for the notices which will appear in your parish soon, with details of how to obtain an application form and the dates for submitting completed applications. If you have any questions, or wish to obtain a form, please contact the Electoral Roll officer for your parish, as follows:

- **Bruton (including Wyke Champflower and Redlynch):**  
Jane Bennett, 07342 175185, jim283@hotmail.co.uk
- **Bratton Seymour:** Debbie Garrett, 07854 307864,  
dmgarrett22@gmail.com
- **Brewham:** Zena Dabinett, 01749 850441,  
zena.dabinett@gmail.com
- **Pitcombe:** Hilary Allom, 01749 813027,  
hilary.allom@gmail.com
- **Shepton Montague:** Sarah Maude, 01749 812149  
sarahjmaude@btinternet.com



## Regular Giving at St Mary's

A huge thank you to all those who have increased their regular giving to St Mary's last year. Between us, we managed to increase our regular giving by 27%. This was a major factor in enabling us to meet our expenses in full, despite the substantial increase in our contribution to the Common Fund. The other major factor in meeting our costs in 2024 was a big increase in our fundraising efforts through the various events we held – so an equally big thank you is due to the events team for their hard work.

As many people will know, Jill Bishton died last month. For many years, Jill administered the Gift Aid for St Mary's. We now need to find someone to take on this role. If anyone feels able to do this (instructions can be given), please do get in touch. Claiming Gift Aid adds 25% to the value of eligible donations, so is vital.

**IMPORTANT:** If you are someone who uses numbered envelopes to make your donations to St Mary's, please contact Alice Evans ([treasurer@stmarysbruton.org](mailto:treasurer@stmarysbruton.org)) to inform her of the number you use on your envelopes. We need to compile a new list that matches donors to their numbers. This is essential to submitting a valid claim so please do take note and respond. This does not apply to the yellow envelopes that bear the donor's name, only the numbered envelopes.





## Prayer Ministry

Almighty and most merciful God, who hast given us a commandment that we should love one another, give us also grace that we may fulfil it. Make us gentle, courteous and forbearing.

Direct our lives so that we may look to the good of others in word and deed. And hallow all our friendships by the blessing of thy spirit; for his sake who loved us and gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Bishop Brooke Foss Westcott (1825-1901)*

At 8.30 am every Wednesday morning some of us meet to pray for our community and any one is welcome to join us. If you have any requests for prayer, please send them to the Rector and he will advise us on the requests.

## Benefice Discussion Group

The first letter of St Peter engages with some topics that are both ancient and contemporary in the life of the Church: persecution and exile; suffering; power and authority; some thoughts about holiness. We will explore this letter in four sessions on Mondays in February, with groups meeting at the Rectory in Bruton at 3.00 pm or 6.30 pm. No pre-reading is required and all are welcome.



## Notes from an Organist...

### **What's in a name?**

I was looking through the pages of Church Music Quarterly recently, the September 2024 issue in fact, as it contained some fascinating articles. I was, I confess, intrigued by the names of the contributors as well as what they had written. If you think this is another of your mad organist's flights of fancy, do borrow my copy of the magazine and check for yourself.

David PIPE, presumably no advocate of the electronic instrument, is organist of Huddersfield Town Hall and a former assistant Director of Music at York Minster. He describes an unusual concert call Organic Doom in which he joined forces with metal bands Pantheist, Aro and Plague of Angels. Clearly a more adventurous organist than you'd guess from his name!

Emily BELS is a leading figure in promoting choral singing rather than change-ringing, as you might expect. Her article explores the challenges facing the British choral tradition.

Ian CHURCH who is – no surprise – a church organist and teacher, recounts his experience of restarting a junior choir at his church after Covid.

David W. MUSIC (sic), Professor Emeritus of Church Music at Baylor University, Waco, Texas, contributes an erudite article on the hymns of Isaac Watts, on which he is an authority.

It was in the pages of a different journal that the name of Geoffrey COFFIN caught my attention. A distinguished organist – another former assistant at York Minster – and organ-builder, his recent recording made at Selby Abbey received critical acclaim in *Organists' Review*. It was in vain, however, that I sought his guidance in the pages of either journal on the choice of organ music for funerals, though I have no reason to question his expertise in this field.

Finally, could any church musician have a more magnificent name than Alwyn SURPLICE? He was of an earlier generation (1906–1977), so there was no chance of finding an authoritative article by him in the *Church Music Quarterly* on choir robes and ecclesiastical vestments, though I'll wager that what he didn't know about such things isn't worth knowing. I'll also wager that he must once have been a cathedral chorister and that he had a friend in the trebles called Archie CASSOCK. No: that last idea *is* a flight of fancy!

Alwyn Surplice, now an obscure figure, seems to be known for one hymn tune occasionally used at Epiphany for *Brightest and best of the sons of the morning*. We normally sing the simple but uplifting tune by J.F.Thrupp (*Brightest and best*) but Surplice's tune (*Wessex*) does appear in *Ancient and Modern* and is the first choice in the *New English Hymnal*, so it must have some merit.



Organisations from across the organ and church music world have announced Play the Organ Year 2025, a year-long project to increase

the number of people playing the organ and appreciating its music. Anna Lapwood, one of the most distinguished British organists and Patron of the campaign, writes in *Organists'* review: 'The organ is a unique and fabulous instrument, and we want as many people as possible to discover how truly thrilling it is to play one.' She urges organists to throw open the doors and share this experience with a record number of people. For my part I will happily try to encourage aspiring organists of any age. An introductory lesson will be included, free of charge!



*Photo: Anna Kapustina*



## Death & Service

Author and historian Richard Cooper-Knight recently made some enquiries to the benefice office regarding a memorial at St Peter's, Redlynch. He has spent the last few years researching the 840+ First World War Commonwealth War Graves around Somerset. One of the stories he's uncovered is that of Second Lieutenant Cedric Pepper, whose ashes are immured in St Peter's. He photographs each of the graves he researches and adds them to an ever-growing record which you can read about here:

**<https://deathandservice.co.uk/>**

From his website:

*There are now more than 1500 servicemen and women commemorated on the Death and Service website.*

*One thousand graves from across ten counties and over 100 regiments. These are men and women from across Great Britain, the Empire and beyond, who gave their lives for their King and their Country.*

*Lives cut short by illnesses, injuries, drownings, suicides, car, motorbike and aircraft accidents. The oldest was 67, the youngest just 15 years old.*

He invites you to read the stories of the fallen.

# Arts Events

## Events at St Mary's.


We are setting up a mailing list for concerts, talks and other events at St Mary's. Please sign up and tell all your friends and neighbours. It's very easy to do – just scan the QR code below using your phone's camera, and you'll be directed to our sign-up page where

you can input your details, and select which events you'd like to hear about. You can unsubscribe from this list any time simply by getting in touch with us.

We've had some wonderful events so far, ranging from folk duo Martin & Eliza Carthy to Simon Armitage, Poet Laureate! We're currently preparing for what we hope will be another busy year.



*for more **EVENTS** at **ST MARY'S***  
*sign up here*



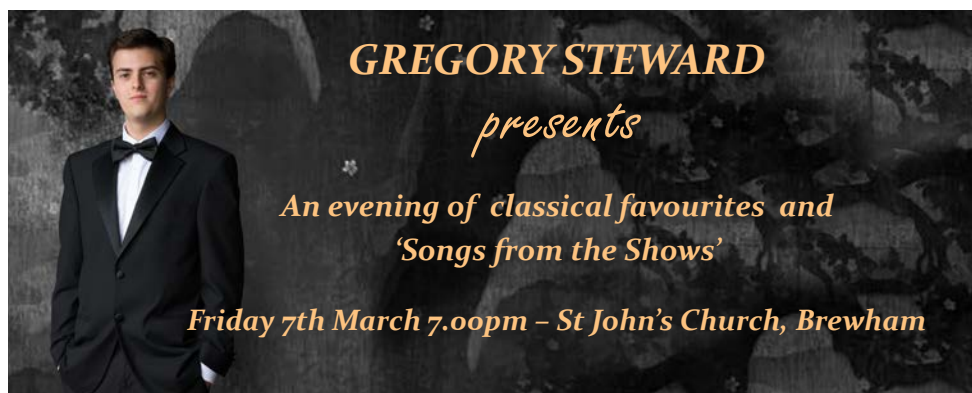
[www.stmarysbruton.org](http://www.stmarysbruton.org)

## Gregory Steward at St John's, Brewham, 7th March, 7pm.

We are having another fundraising concert! This time a young tenor – Gregory Steward – will entertain us with songs from old musical shows and favourite classics. He has a lovely voice so do come along to hear him.

Tickets are £12 from Bruton Post Office, and on the door, to include a glass of wine or a soft drink.

See you there!



## Hejira – Saturday March 15th



Hejira is a 7-piece celebrating the works of Joni Mitchell. Having released the albums *The Hissing of Summer Lawns*, *Hejira*, *Don Juan's*

*Reckless Daughter* and *Mingus*, Joni then toured with a band formed from contemporaneous jazz musicians (Metheny, Mays, Brecker, Pastorius and Alias). The tour was recorded, producing the outstanding live album *Shadows And Light*. It is from this album that Hejira draws the body of its repertoire.

***Tickets:***

***<https://cabaretvoltaireevents.com/event/hejira/>***



**Steve Jolliffe from Tangerine Dream performing various works,  
including *The Bruton Suite* – March 21st 8pm**

After meeting Rick Davies of Supertramp in the late 1960s Steve played with Rick in a band called the Joint. Steve left the Joint to study music at the Berlin Konservatorium where he met Edgar Froese and subsequently toured and recorded with Edgar in the hay-day of Tangerine Dream. Steve went on to join Steamhammer and finally found his destiny as a solo artist, with a prolific output of albums and live performances including the iconic ‘Pyramid Stage’ at Glastonbury. It was in the 80’s, when living in the small town of Bruton, near Glastonbury, that he was inspired to write *The Bruton Suite*. For one night only, Steve will perform excerpts from *The Bruton Suite*, married with a selection from his other various works, on the Eve of the Spring Equinox, Friday, 21 March 2025.

***Tickets:***

***<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/somerset/st-marys-church-bruton-somerset/steve-jolliffe-the-bruton-suite/e-vkzezd>***



Steve Jolliffe  
from  
Tangerine Dream

Performing  
a selection from various works including  
The Bruton Suite

Open 7pm Start 8pm  
Friday 21 March 2025  
St. Mary's Church Bruton  
Tickets from [ticketsource.co.uk](https://ticketsource.co.uk)  
Early bird £15, Standard £17.50, On the Door £20

## Shepton Montague Film Night

### SHEPTON MONTAGUE PCC

in association with

### SOMERSET MOVIOLA

proudly presents

# THE CRITIC

(2023/95 minutes/15)

Set in 1930s London, *The Critic* revolves around a feared theatre critic named Jimmy Erskine (Ian McKellen), his loyal assistant, a newspaper owner (Mark Strong) who wants to get rid of the critic, and an actress (Gemma Arterton) who has been devastated by his excoriating theatrical reviews. The critic's determination to survive ensures that the other characters are caught in a web of blackmail, deceit and murder.

Director: Anand Tucker

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

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February**

**at 7.30pm**

*Doors open 6.45pm for drinks & snacks*

**Tickets: £7.00 (£3.50 for under 15)**

**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 01749 812 149*

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



## Lent Course

We are planning a Lent course, to take place on four Monday evenings in Lent, starting on March 10th. Further details will be publicised later, but please hold the date and do consider coming along – all are welcome.



# Bruton Benefice Services

<b>Season</b> Ordinary Time <b>(Green)</b>	<b>Sunday 2nd Feb</b> Presentation of Christ in the Temple	<b>Sunday 9th Feb</b> 4 before Lent (Proper 1)	<b>Sunday 16th Feb</b> 3 before Lent (Proper 2)	<b>Sunday 23rd Feb</b> 2 before Lent (Proper 3)
<b>St John the Baptist, Brewham</b>	9.30 am Eucharist (CW)	—	9.30 am Morning Prayer	—
<b>St Mary's, Bruton</b>	8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)  6.00 pm Choral Evensong for Candlemas	8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)  11.00 am Eucharist (CW1)	8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)  11.00 am All Age Worship	8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)  9.00 am Breakfast Service  11.00 am Eucharist (CW1)
<b>St Leonard's, Pitcombe</b>	11.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)	9.30 am Holy Communion (BCP)	11.00 am Matins (BCP)	4.00 pm Evensong (BCP)
<b>St Peter's, Redlynch</b>	—	—	—	—
<b>St Peter's, Shepton Montague</b>	—	6.00 pm Evening Prayer (CW)	—	9.30 am Eucharist (CW1)
<b>Holy Trinity, Wyke</b>	—	—	9.30 am Holy Communion (BCP)	—
<b>St Nicholas, Bratton Seymour</b>	—	—	—	—

## St Mary's Choirs

Singing is, for some, an important aspect of church life, but if this isn't true for you one thing that is universally accepted is that singing has many wonderful benefits. These range from immersing yourself in the kind of interactive learning that deepens your knowledge of maths, languages, reading, and of course the grammar of music, through to developing teamwork skills, learning how to be a mentor, and it can even help with memory loss. Singing as a group can boost confidence and self-esteem, and because it releases endorphins, it can make us feel happy! If all of this sounds like it might be for you, young or old, experienced or inexperienced, please feel free to email [benefice@stmarysbruton.org](mailto:benefice@stmarysbruton.org) and ask about it. We'd love to hear from you!



# Diary Dates

## February

- 3 • Benefice Discussion Group, 3pm or 6.30pm at the Rectory
- 7 • Memorial service for Stuart Adlington, 2pm at St Mary's
- 10 • Benefice Discussion Group, 3pm or 6.30pm at the Rectory
- 11 • Funeral: the late Valerie Norton, St Mary's, 11 am
- 13 • Funeral: the late Elfrida Routh, Brewham, 10am
- 13 • Film Night at St Peter's, Shepton Montague, 7.30pm
- 14 • Funeral: the late Jill Bishton, St Mary's, 1.30pm
- 17 • Benefice Discussion Group, 3pm or 6.30pm at the Rectory
- 17 • Brewham PCC meeting, 7pm, Colinhayes
- 19 • Wyke Champflower annual meeting, 7pm at Wyke Manor
- 21 • Pitcombe PCC meeting, 2.30pm, Hadspen Farm
- 24 • Benefice Discussion Group, 3pm or 6.30pm at the Rectory
- 25 • Shepton Montague PCC meeting, 6.30pm at the village hall
- 26 • FoSM talk: *Ghouls, Ghosts and the enduring appeal of the Gothic* by Rebecca Thorne, The Chapel, 7pm

## March

- 3 • Brewham PCC meeting, 7pm, Colinhayes
- 5 • Ash Wednesday Eucharist with imposition of ashes, 6pm, St Mary's
- 9 • Gregory Steward, St John's, Brewham, 7pm
- 10 • Lent course (details tbc)

## March cont'd

- 12 • Bruton PCC, 5.30pm, Plox meeting room
- 15 • Diocesan Synod
- 15 • Hejira, St Mary's, 8pm
- 17 • Lent course (details tbc)
- 21 • FoSM concert, Steve Joliffe, St Mary's, 8pm
- 22 • Breaking Bread, Bruton Community Hall, time tbc
- 24 • Lent course (details tbc)
- 26 • Deanery Synod
- 31 • Lent course (details tbc)

## Contact

**Rev'd Jonathan Evans, Rector**

**8 Wellesley Green, Bruton, BA10 0DU**

**Tel: 01749 812775**

**email: [rector@stmarysbruton.org](mailto:rector@stmarysbruton.org)**

**Benefice Office**

**Plox House, Silver Street, Bruton, BA10 0ED**

**Tel: 01749 813080**

**email: [benefice@stmarysbruton.org](mailto:benefice@stmarysbruton.org)**





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