



Bruton Pitcombe Redlynch Brewham Shepton Montague Wyke Champflower Bratton Seymour



We were delighted to welcome Bishop Michael to the Benefice on 12 March and 16 March. On both days, Bishop Michael was kept busy, meeting a range of people and finding out more about our church life together. Huge thanks are owed to David and Tamsyn Cowie for providing and organising the refreshments in the evening.

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In his sermons at St John's and at the All Age Eucharist at St Mary's, Bishop Michael encouraged us to understand Jesus as 'the real thing' - the genuine revelation of God among us; one in whom we can trust; one whom we should follow.



Lent is the season during which we take time to consider more carefully and slowly what it might mean for each of us to follow Jesus. We have been doing just this during the meetings of our Lent discussion group. Most people find that their faith is encouraged, strengthened and deepened through conversation with other disciples. Private prayer and personal study can be very valuable, but the nature of the Church is essentially corporate – we learn from and with one another, not alone. You do not need to know anything about the Bible or our faith to join in the Benefice discussion



group meetings and they are very non-threatening! Please do consider coming along to the next series: you never know what you might discover.



If you have something to contribute to a future edition of this newsletter, 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

### **St Mary's Spring Clean**

On Saturday the 12th of April, St Mary's is holding its annual Spring Clean. It is a time for us to scrub and clean, dust and polish, mend, sweep, clear everything inside and out to make sure the church is ready for Easter Day. The day is usually split into two halves - a morning crew and an afternoon crew, who meet at lunch time to share some food and admire the work that has been done, and plan the work yet to come. Believe it or not, it is a really fun day and there are jobs to suit everyone, and it brings a real sense of achievement and satisfaction when the congregation come in for the Palm Sunday services and see everything gleaming bright!



## **Film Night at Shepton Montague**

April's film will be shown on Thursday 10th. **CONCLAVE** is the winner of four BAFTAs including Best Film and eight Oscar nominations, based on the best seller by Robert Harris. Shown in English, Italian, Spanish and Latin with subtitles.

### **CONCLAVE**

(2024/120 minutes/12A)

The pope is dead. Behind the locked doors of the Sistine Chapel, 118 Cardinals from all over the globe will cast their votes in the world's most secretive election. Cardinal Lawrence (Ralph Fiennes) is tasked with running this covert process. The four front-runners are Bellini (Stanley Tucci), Adeyemi (Lucian Msamati), Tremblay (John Lithgow) and Tedesco (Sergio Castellitto). These are holy men. But they have ambition. And they have rivals. And they have secrets. Over the next 72 hours, one of them will become the most powerful spiritual figure in the world. Directed by Edward Berger.

Screenings in St Peter's with doors opening at 7.00pm and film at 7.30pm. Tickets are £7.00 (£3.50 for under 15s) and refreshments are available, payment by cash or card. It is advisable to bring a cushion! We look forward to welcoming you.

Sarah Maude 01749 812 149, [sarahjmaude@btinternet.com](mailto:sarahjmaude@btinternet.com)

## **St Leonard's Spring Clean**

On Saturday 12th April at 10 a.m. we are going to do some gardening in the churchyard and graveyard, mainly pruning shrubs, removing ivy from walls and trees and oiling benches. If you were able to help, we would be very grateful, especially if you were able

to bring your own tools. Coffee and biscuits will be provided.

## Other News

We have had very enjoyable concerts at St John's and St Mary's in March and we are looking forward to many more during the course of the year. We give details of all concerts and talks etc in



this newsletter, but you can also direct people to the St Mary's website, on the 'Community' page. Please do encourage people to attend these events, which are good community-building occasions.

Congratulations to Arthur (and Hector)! Bath Rugby recently triumphed in the Premiership Rugby Cup, defeating Exeter Chiefs 48-14. Arthur Green, who

worships regularly with us when not on duty with Bath, was in the starting XV and helped drive Bath to their impressive win. Arthur's brother Hector has good reason to be proud of his big brother.

Remember that we have our Annual Meetings during April (see the diary dates at the end of this newsletter). Please do come along and encourage others to attend and share your thoughts about what we can and should be focusing on in the year ahead.

# Gregory Steward



Young tenor Gregory Steward entertained residents of Brewham to a concert of favourites from well known musicals and operas in St John's Church, Brewham, on Friday 7 March. *An evening of Classical favourites and Songs from the Shows* was very much enjoyed by all!

Prior to launching himself onto the professional circuit, Gregory was a joint specialist vocal and trumpet scholar at Wells Cathedral School. He was the winner of the Taunton Young Singer Competition and a semi-finalist in the prestigious Somerset Song Prize, a National Competition for singers up to the age of 25. Gregory graduated from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama with a First in Music, having studied voice with Tim Richards. He has sung with the nationally acclaimed Tenebrae, as well as with The Wellensian Consort, and the Choir of St John's College, Oxford.





## Bruton Bellringers – They Ring for You

On the radio, you often get 'shoutouts' where the DJ asks listeners to send in a story to thank somebody for something, and we can do something similar with the bells. Through our Facebook page, people can send us 'thanks' for something that's been done in the community - it could be finding a lost pet, or raising money for charity – It doesn't matter. It is there to highlight the good things that happen.

Prior to ringing on Sunday, we would do a 'shout out' on Facebook as to what we're ringing for, the idea being that the bells are not only a call to worship, but the sound of a weekly celebration of the good that's happened in Bruton; churchgoer or not, the bells become relevant to all.

<https://www.facebook.com/BellringersOfBruton>

## The Easter Liturgy

This Easter, why not commit to exploring the depth of our faith in Jesus by joining in with some or all of the Easter Liturgy? This is an opportunity to spend time reflecting on your faith and seeking to strengthen it, by sitting quietly and listening. These Holy Week services are the high point of the Christian year, without which nothing else that we do makes sense.

During Holy Week, there will be an opportunity for quiet reflection on the theme of Christ's suffering, followed by a short service of Compline (night prayer). This will take place on Mon-Weds of Holy

Week. The time for reflection will be at St Mary's at 6.00pm and compline will be at 7.00pm - at St Mary's on Monday and Tuesday and at Sexey's Hospital on Wednesday.

Then on Maundy Thursday we remember the events of the Last Supper, the prototype of our Eucharist, and Christ's agony in Gethsemane. We will share in a Eucharist, followed by a watch, as we remember Jesus' time of intense prayer. The service will be at St Mary's and will begin at 6.00pm.

On Good Friday, we gather before the Cross to contemplate the gift of God's own self for our redemption. The service includes periods of silence as we seek to know the meaning and power of the Cross. The service is at St Mary's and begins at 2.00pm and lasts for 1 hour.

We start the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday with a time of readings and silence. The readings trace the story of God's purposes for humanity. The silence gives space for prayer and contemplation. We keep the Vigil not through the entire night, as is traditional, but just for 1½ hours. This year, the Vigil will be held at the Rectory in Bruton, starting at 8.30 pm.

We celebrate the resurrection of our Lord with the Service of Light. Traditionally this service forms the end of the all-night Vigil and occurs at dawn. It then continues with the Easter Eucharist. But we make things a little easier. The Service of Light will be at 6.30 am, starting in the churchyard of St Mary's, around a fire, symbolising the light of Christ. After the short service, we share breakfast in the Community Hall. Then we part company until we gather again for the Eucharist.



The Easter Eucharist will be celebrated at 8.00 am at St Mary's, and at 9.30 am St John's Brewham, St Peter's, Shepton Montague, and Holy Trinity, Wyke; and at 11.00 am at St Leonard's and St Peter's, Redlynch and St Mary's. We are very grateful to our retired clergy for making it possible to celebrate in so many of our churches on Easter Sunday. Go a little further out into the water this Easter: try the Easter Liturgy.

## Jon Pickard

### **The Wonders of Wood and Wire**

Some may remember a concert in 2012 by American Harp-Guitarist John Doan. This time, local musician Jon Pickard offers a rare glimpse into the wonderful world of harp-guitars, which have added banks of strings to extend the range and textures, the pinnacle of plucked strings evolution.

Jon will be playing music by Bach, Debussy, Dire Straits, plus original music – a feast of sound. He designed his two harp-guitars here in Bruton, and has performed in international festivals across the UK, France and the USA. He has recorded and released three harp-guitar albums and has been included on two compilations. He teaches piano and guitar in local schools, and privately.

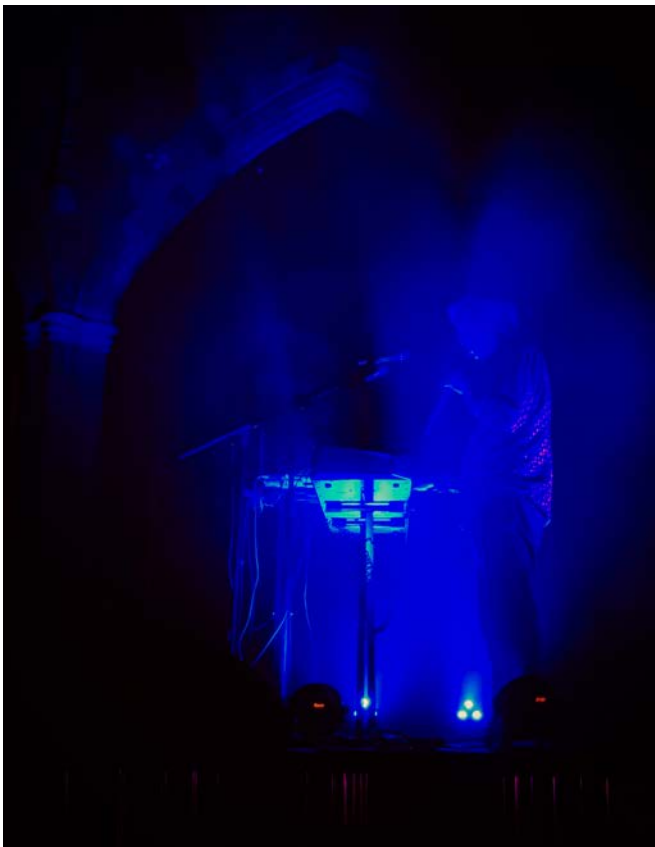
The concert is at St Mary's, Saturday 26, doors at 7 for 7.30pm start. Tickets are £15 (over 65s and under 16s £12) and available from <https://wegottickets.com/event/653062/> (booking fee) or Bruton Convenience Store.

# Steve Jolliffe Concert



The Steve Jolliffe Concert on Friday 21 March was a big success! It was wonderful to hear excerpts from *The Bruton Suite*, a heart-felt piece written by Steve Jolliffe for the folk of Bruton. These excerpts were woven together with other works to create a magical tapestry of music.

It was also an occasion for many people to be reunited, as Steve returned to Bruton, where he lived more than 40 years ago.



It was a joy to see the faces of people reliving years gone by and catching up with Steve in the present. With the passage of time we change physically, but when reunited with friends the memories return and in an instance we are young again.

Thank you to everybody involved in making this a special and memorable event

***David Freestone - Event Organiser***

# Prayer Ministry

## **This month the prayer focus is our Parish Churches**

O God, make the door of this house wide enough to receive all who need human love and fellowship; narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride and strife. Make its threshold smooth enough to be no stumbling-block to children, nor to straying feet, but rugged and strong enough to turn back the tempter's power.

God, make the door of this house the gateway to thine eternal kingdom.

***Amen.***

Some specific prayer points:

1. All who contribute to the services held in our churches - sidespeople, people who provide the music, those who read and lead intercessions, those who provide refreshments and others.
2. Those who make decisions about the future - rector, church wardens, PCC members.
3. Everyone who visits our churches, whether for a service or just to take a look.





## Kimberley Snapshot

This picture is the bark/corregated iron church, the sides completely opened out so that on the very hot days during the Wet Season any pervading breeze was caught. Bullemen was the name that our community called the cattle.



In an effort to produce better cattle, four-part Brahmin bulls had been added to the herd and their names were Matthew, Mark, Luke and John! Matthew was a softie who would come up to you to try and get some bread, however one Sunday morning we were all standing outside the church after communion when suddenly a cry went up: *Get out of the way!* We jumped and Luke went thundering past – never a dull moment on Lombadina!



## Diocesan Policy on Non-Payment of the Benefice Share

In November 2024, the Bishop's Council agreed a policy regarding the consequences for a Benefice if it does not pay its Benefice Share in full. The minutes of that meeting were made available to members of Diocesan Synod as part of the papers for the meeting of Synod last month.

The policy sets out that, if a Benefice is struggling to pay its contribution to the Common Fund (i.e. its Benefice Share payment), then support and advice will be provided to help it achieve the required level of contribution. If that does not happen, then the policy states: 'If a benefice does not or cannot make its benefice share contributions, when it becomes vacant or is vacant, an appointment will not be made until either the share is being paid, or there is an agreed plan for recovery'.

At Diocesan Synod, in answer to a question, it was made clear that in a multi-parish benefice such as ours, this consequence would be applied even if some of the parishes in that Benefice were paying in full their proportion of the total Benefice Share – if some of the parishes were not paying in full, with the result that the total Benefice contribution was falling short, then the consequence would apply to the entire Benefice.



## Growing Good



We have set aside some dates in May to run the Growing Good course, as mentioned in previous newsletters (exploring the connection between social action, discipleship and growth). However, so far only two people from across the Benefice have expressed any interest in attending. We need more than two people to make this course meaningful, and ideally each parish would participate.

The Growing Good course is one possible way into an answer to the survival question that faces all of our congregations: we often hear people say that numbers are dwindling and no-one new is joining. This course tackles exactly that issue. We can't expect to find answers if we don't discuss the questions, so please do get in touch and come along if you can. Please don't assume that this course is for other people – it is for all of us.





# 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 Oysterband to Simon Armitage, Poet Laureate to Steve Jolliffe from Tangerine Dream!



***Sign up here***

# SHEPTON MONTAGUE PCC

in association with

## SOMERSET MOVIOLA

proudly presents

# CONCLAVE

(2024/120 minutes/12A)

Based on the best-seller by Robert Harris. The pope is dead. Behind the locked doors of the Sistine Chapel, 118 Cardinals from all over the globe will cast their votes in the world's most secretive election. Cardinal Lawrence (Ralph Fiennes) is tasked with running this covert process. The four front-runners are Bellini (Stanley Tucci), Adeyemi (Lucian Msamati), Tremblay (John Lithgow) and Tedesco (Sergio Castellitto). These are holy men. But they have ambition. And they have rivals. And they have secrets. Over the next 72 hours, one of them will become the most powerful spiritual figure in the world. Director, Edward Berger

*In English, Italian, Spanish and Latin with subtitles*

Winner of 4 BAFTAs including Best Film and 8 Oscar nominations

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

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April**

**at 7.30pm**

*Doors open 7.00pm 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)**





St Mary's Church presents

# Wonders of Wood & Wire

a Harp Guitar Odyssey

Jon Pickard

Classical / Folk / Original  
From Debussy to Dire Straits,  
Bach, O'Carolan & much more

*"Weaves a flying carpet on the  
strings...Almost unbelievable,  
technically, stylistically..."*

Akustik Gitarre Magazine

*"Revolutionary...  
Absolutely breathtaking!"*

BritishTheatre.com

*"A true visionary..."*

*"A gem of a show"*

Buxton Fringe

St Mary's Church Bruton, BA10 0DU  
Saturday 26 April - Doors open 7pm

Bar available, funds to support the church

Tickets £15. Over 65's under 16's £12

Tickets: Bruton Convenience Store, 23 High Street

Or: <https://wegottickets.com/event/653062/>



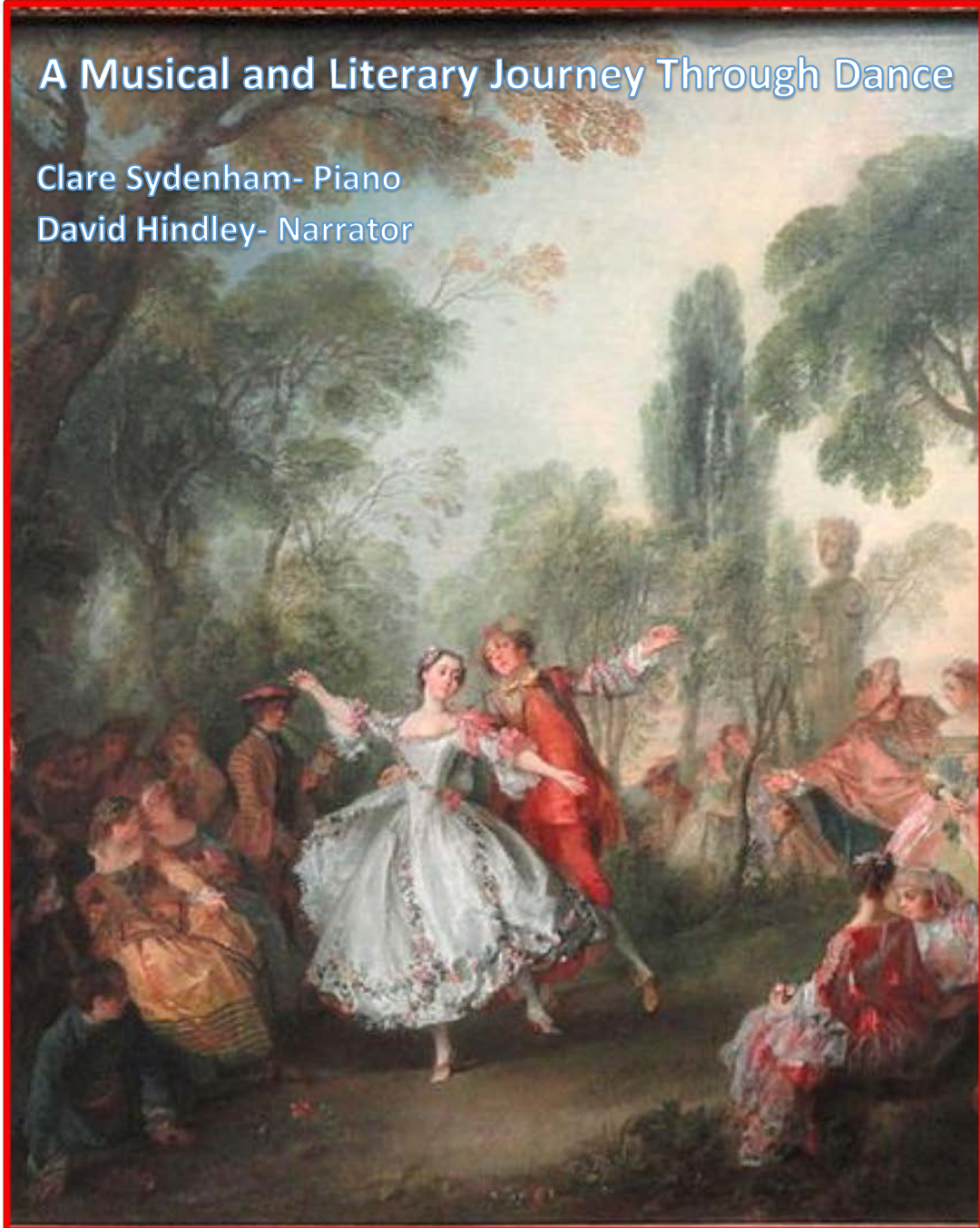


# ARABESQUE

A Musical and Literary Journey Through Dance

Clare Sydenham- Piano

David Hindley- Narrator

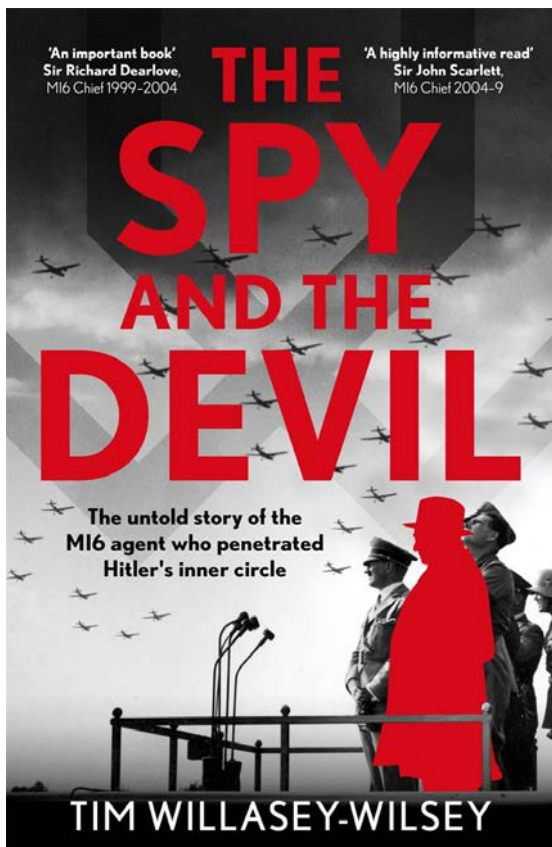


Sunday April 27<sup>th</sup> 3pm



St. Mary's Church, Bruton BA10 0EB

Advance Tickets £10 online (no booking fee), on door £12/under 18 free  
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/clare-sydenham/t-jznprx> or [clare.sydpiano@gmail.com](mailto:clare.sydpiano@gmail.com)



## The Spy and the Devil

*The forgotten tale of MI6's top spy in Nazi Germany and his bid to stop the Second World War.*

In the world of espionage, where the accounts of renowned spies often dominate the narrative, this is a rare gem – an untold story of a completely unknown spy.

Baron William de Ropp, a Baltic German aristocrat, wasn't just any ordinary spy; he was MI6's top secret agent in Nazi

Germany from 1931 to 1939, managing to escape Berlin just before war broke out. This unsung hero had direct access to Adolf Hitler and an inside track on the Nazi regime. His reports, shrouded in secrecy, had the power to shape British policy toward Germany in a pivotal period of history.

*The Spy and the Devil* is a riveting tale of espionage, intrigue, and the untold impact of one man's secret mission on the course of history. A journey into the shadows of Nazi Germany, where a forgotten British spy worked tirelessly to avert catastrophe, and discover the secrets that history almost left behind.

Bill de Ropp's story has never been published in full before, adding an extra dimension to what is, by any standard, the account of a very remarkable man. Drawing on his years of service in the Foreign Office, Tim Willasey-Wilsey offers an insider's view of this outstandingly effective but enigmatic British spy.

Tim lives in Shepton Montague.

## Benefice Services

Season Lent/Easter <b>(Purple, Gold)</b>	<b>Sunday 6 April</b> Lent 5	<b>Sunday 13 April</b> Palm Sunday	<b>Thurs 17 April</b> Maundy Thursday
<b>St John the Baptist, Brewham</b>	9.30am Eucharist (CW)	—	—
<b>St Mary's, Bruton</b>	8am Holy Communion (BCP)  11am Sung Eucharist (CW1)	8am Holy Communion (BCP)  11am Palm Sunday Eucharist (CW1)	6pm Eucharist of the Last Supper and Watch
<b>St Leonard's, Pitcombe</b>	11am Holy Communion (BCP)	9.30am Holy Communion (BCP)	—
<b>St Peter's, Redlynch</b>	—	—	—
<b>St Peter's, Shepton Montague</b>	—	6pm Evening Prayer (CW)	—
<b>Holy Trinity, Wyke</b>	—	—	—
<b>St Nicholas, Bratton Seymour</b>	—	—	—



# Benefice Services

<b>Friday 18 April Good Friday</b>	<b>Sat 19 April Holy Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday 20 April Easter Sunday</b>	<b>Sunday 27 April Easter 2</b>
—	—	9.30 am Euchrist (CW)	—
2pm An hour at the Cross	8.30pm Easter Vigil The Rectory	6.30am Service of Light  8am Holy Communion (BCP)  11am Sung Eucharist Banns	8am Holy Communion (BCP)  9am Breakfast Service  11am Eucharist (CW1)
—	—	11am Holy Communion (BCP)	6pm Evensong (BCP)
—	—	11am Eucharist (CW1)	—
—	—	9.30am Eucharist (CW1)	—
—	—	9.30am Holy Communion (BCP)	—
—	—	—	—

# Diary Dates

## April

- 3 • Roman Catholic Mass, St Mary's, 10am
- 4 • Bratton Seymour APCM, 11am
- 7 • Brewham APCM, 7pm
- 8 • Shepton Montague APCM, 6.30pm
- 9 • Bruton APCM, 5.30pm
- 10 • Shepton Montague Film Night, 7.30pm, St Peter's
- 11 • Pitcombe APCM, 6pm
- 12 • St Mary's Spring Clean, start 10am
- 12 • Churchyard Clean-up, St Leonard's, Pitcombe, 10am
- 13 • Holy Week commences
- 20 • Easter Sunday
- 26 • Concert: Jon Pickard, St Mary's, 7pm
- 27 • Concert: *Arabesque*, St Mary's, 3pm

## May

- 8 • Shepton Montague Film Night, 7.30pm, St Peter's
- 10 • Somerset Russets, 7.30pm, St Mary's
- 21 • Opera: Grove & Kobbe, a talk by Elisabeth Balfour,  
At The Chapel, 6.30 for 7pm.
- 31 • Sophie Sherwood Cyanotypes, all day, St Mary's, Bruton

# Contact

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

**Tel: 01749 812775**

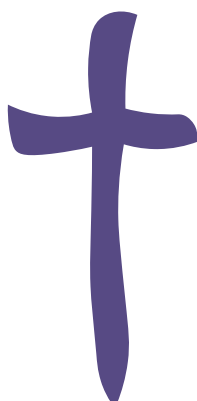
**email: [rector@stmarysbruton.org](mailto:rector@stmarysbruton.org)**

**Benefice Office**

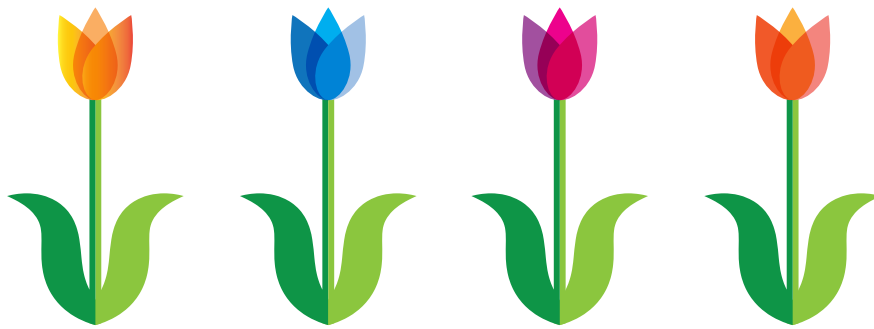
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