

The Parish Churches of Rodney Stoke and Draycott

March 2021



Then as now

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Heralding the Spring

I don't know anything about
music

People of Faith Rise Together

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Only those with tenacity can
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Your churches – March update

At the time of writing it seems likely that your churches will be still be closed (and that services in church will remain cancelled) during early March. However the situation is changing gradually- many of us are getting vaccinated, and the prevalence of Covid-19 is dropping. There will be a point in the near future when we will feel able to resume church openings and will restart church services. We do not yet know when either will happen – we fervently hope, by Easter - but it might even be before then. Any developments will be publicised, on our website and in the villages.

ZOOM services

ZOOM services for the benefice continue. Sunday services are now at 10:30 am and will alternate between Morning Prayer and Holy Communion. In the week we will continue to have ZOOM services at 8:30 pm on weekday evenings, and 10:00 am on Saturday.

If you would like to join any of these services, please could you email the Rector for joining instructions and to be added to the email circulation list – stuart.burns01@gmail.com.

Please note that these arrangements are reviewed regularly and may change in the course of the month. The most up-to-date information will always be posted on the website: www.rodneystokewithdraycott.org.uk.

Pastoral Letter to the Benefice from Judith Rose

Dear Friends,

I'm thinking of 'B's, not bees but the 'B's of being a christian. The christian faith is about 3 'B's.

Belief of which much could be said. That belief is expressed in how we live i.e. **Behaviour**.

The 3rd 'B' is **Belonging**, and that is quite difficult to put into practise at this time. Apart from essential workers and those who cannot work from home, the rest of us are told to stay apart. We understand the reason and it is an essential temporary measure, but we all miss the close interaction with others, especially family and friends.



An ill of western society is loneliness and the current situation makes that worse. The word 'church' comes from the greek 'ekklesia' meaning 'assembly' or 'gathering together'. Christians are called to come together. Yes, to worship but also to talk, laugh and even cry together and so support one another. That is to **Belong**. One of the last commands Jesus gave his disciples was, 'to love one another', to be there for each other.

A few christians are called to the solitary life but most of us, need one another. A good family gives that sort of support. It is not surprising therefore that the church is called the 'family of God', a family to which every committed christian belongs. Of course we still belong even if we cannot actually meet but belonging becomes real when we physically meet together. Let's pray that before too long we will be able to meet again. To express that **belonging** in mutual support, friendship and to welcome others. In the meantime we do the best we can, thanks to the internet, telephone or waving to one another at a distance. It is that 3rd 'B', **Belonging** that we must rebuild as soon as possible.

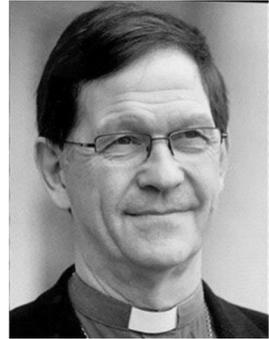
Our **Belief** in Christ is a great resource for ourselves. Right **Behaviour** is a mark of concern for others, but without that sense of **Belonging** our faith has a dimension missing. We need to value and foster that just as much as the other 2 'B's.

Judith Rose

Letter from the Nigel Stock Hon. Assistant Bishop of Bath and Wells

Pay loving attention

With the Lenten Season well under way, I wonder how it is going for you? I always anticipate Lent with a slight feeling of having to brace myself. Come on make an effort in something! If I am going to give something up don't just make it an exercise in self-improvement, how is it going to help others? If I am going to do something positive what will be its long-term effect? It is all too easy to 'over think' the whole exercise.



Once the season is under way I begin to appreciate it. But in the end it should be about paying attention to God. I am always struck by the end of the story of the temptations in the wilderness. Jesus refuses to be a cheap miracle worker to benefit himself, and refuses to follow the route to worldly power and status. He faced temptation by stripping away all the necessities of life and knew deep hunger. At the end of this exhausting wrestle with his vocation the Gospel tells us

"...suddenly angels came and waited on him." (Matthew 4:10)

Whatever Lenten discipline you are following, perhaps the #Live Lent course, or a local study group, a focussed effort to support others or a form of self-denial (or all of them!), may it bring a greater focus on God. There were those who ministered to Jesus in the Gospel stories. The angels in the wilderness, the woman who anointed him, Simon who carried his cross for example. We might not be able to do those things for him, but we can pay loving attention.

When we emerge from the austerity and effort of Lent, which has had an even more austere aspect in Lockdown, we come to the bright hope of Easter. We know in the Risen Christ the same relief that Jesus knew from the Angels. As we offer our love to Him, His love for us is always returned.

May the blessing of the Risen Christ be with you.

Nigel Stock



Then as now

Just under a year ago I wrote a piece for this magazine, 'Counting our Blessings,' in which I tried to convey that historically local daily life was always difficult with hunger, disease and death often appearing at the top of the agenda.

If you are looking for reassurance and support in these continuing difficult times, I believe that you need look no further than what is right on our doorsteps. We are fortunate to live in such a beautiful part of the country and I enjoy meeting villagers out and about for their daily walks on say, Top Road from Draycott to Cheddar or Hill Lane in Rodney Stoke. I am sure this is how people often traditionally met and communicated as they went about their business. No matter what the weather, as well as the physical stimulation, it endures as both refreshing and nourishing for the soul.

In 2016 Rodney Stoke held a series of celebrations and that September I was asked to give a talk, which I called, 'Let's explore Rodney Stoke.' I ended the presentation with a favourite paragraph of mine, which first appeared in a national newspaper in 1954. I refer to it from time to time as it encapsulates in just a few words what the locality means to me.

A haven of peace in a bustling world is this stretch of country deep in Somerset's Mendip Hills. Serenity reigns in this sylvan setting where fat cattle browse on fat acres, as they have done for centuries. That old church of St Leonard has seen war and pestilence and many generations flourish and die, but like the landscape itself it remains unchanged, seemingly impervious to the hand of time. You can forget the rain as you drink in the beauty of it all.

Alan Rowntree

Remembering Chris Neave

Clock keeper
Bell ringer
Church Warden
Neighbour
Friend



Heralding the Spring

Looking out of the kitchen window I can see a circle of the dwarf narcissi Tête-à-tête just coming into bud. They grow at the base of the Italian Alder tree we planted nearly 35 years ago and today they



Tête-à-tête

remind me that it is almost a year since the outbreak of the pandemic and the time of their last flowering. The natural world provides us with landmarks to highlight the passage of time and to evoke memories. I am reminded that our last village event was the Pancake Racing in Millway when children and adults raced along the road between lines of daffodils planted along the grass verges.

However, let us not dwell in the past but enjoy the present moment and the promise of spring and the hope of more good times to come. We have already had some sunny hours working in the garden, especially on Candlemas Day, the second of February. The daphne bholua 'Jaqueline Postill' was in full flower and a dozen or more honey bees were drawn by its sweet scent to feast in the blossoms. The old country saying goes as follows:

If Candlemas Day be fair and bright

Winter will have another flight,

But if Candlemas Day be clouds and rain

Winter is gone and will not come again.

If this proves to be true the honey bees may regret their early foray from the hive.

The garden birds have been a blessing this year, entertaining us from the windows. Our garden has been honoured with a pair of blackcaps who have stayed for some time instead of their usual very fleeting visit. This has been a mixed blessing in that the female especially is very proprietorial over the bird feeder and chases away the tits and dunnocks repeatedly, but they do come back when she is busy elsewhere. Also a pair of grey wagtails have moved into the vicinity attracted, we think, by the flowing ditches in the lane. These two are in addition to the pair who have inhabited the stream near the church for many years.



Grey wagtail

Last Autumn our old mower finally became too expensive to repair and after much consideration a new mower mulcher was purchased. We have never tried to attempt a 'lawn' as such, being happy with a green covering of grass and anything else that blows in on the wind. Insects love the mix of self-heal, buttercup, violets etc. and the woodpeckers feast on the ant hills. On first trial Steven reported that the machine was quite a 'fast mover' and wondered it had a slower speed!

And now we wait for the soil to become less water-logged so that gardening can begin in earnest. The first task is to sow more broad beans as half of the November sowing of seeds was eaten by mice. To assist the local kestrels in their pest control duties our neighbours, Maurice and Judy, have put up a very fine home-made nesting box for their special benefit, giving the birds more time to hunt in the vegetable plots below. Let us hope they show their appreciation.

Ann Percival

Music (and more) Matters

I don't know anything about music: I just like the sound it makes.

I can't remember who said that, but I think he or she meant it as a joke; "After all" it is saying "what is music apart from the sound it makes?" But try saying the sentence above and putting in the word "Italian" in place of "music".



Spoken and sung Italian can sound very beautiful, but of course it has meaning as well. Italian can say things that can't be directly translated into English, and so does music.

Think of how children begin to learn language. They like the comforting sound of their mothers' voices, but they soon pick up the fact that the sound consists of words with meanings, and the words can give them information, emotion and power. Later they start to see the extra, deeper, meanings that can lie alongside the words themselves, and poetry is born.

So, if music has hidden meanings, tell us what it means.

Ah! If I could tell you that, I wouldn't need to write the music. would I?

Amid all the difficulties we have faced over the last few months, we shouldn't be blind to some of the good innovations there have been. For those of us who take part in the ZOOM services, we now have the benefit of visual aids during the sermons. A photograph on the screen can take us right into the heart of the place where the scene is set, in a way that no verbal description ever could. Fine art-work can get the preacher's point across and touch the emotions and the understanding more directly than words can.

I've noticed when we have services in church how intently congregations listen nowadays; after the final responses the organ plays and the people sit and listen. They don't start to talk and put their coats on. They don't walk about and make the coffee. Well-chosen music can add immeasurably to the impact of a service, but you do have to listen to it and not just let it be a background.

In the 17th century, the Puritans in England wanted to simplify worship by getting rid of all the music, art and colour in churches, so that the people could concentrate on the pure Word of God without distraction. This was a fine aim, but unfortunately it was bad psychology; that isn't the way most people's brains work. After eleven years of Puritan austerity, at the restoration of the monarchy, music and colour were back in worship with a vengeance!

So, what am I saying? Music and art, poetry and drama are invaluable aspects of worship. Let's hold onto them all when the present emergency is forgotten.

David Cheetham

Shadow and Light

The past twelve months have seen the entire world living with the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic. Huge changes in our day-to-day living habits have had to be accepted and implemented, if only on a temporary basis. The shadow cast by coronavirus is a long one.

Several points should, however, be borne in mind. One of which is that shadows fade, as well as deepen. The strongest shadow will ultimately lighten and then disappear.

We live in a world of beauty and wonder, notwithstanding our attempts to poison, defile and bring it into ruination and it is important that we acknowledge the fact and act. Shadows should not always be viewed as a negative; harbingers of doom.



After all, the shadows cast by sunlight can offer a relief from the welcome but oft overpowering heat of the sun itself. In order to have shadows, there has to be light and, in both the metaphorical and liturgical senses, it is towards that light we must travel, no matter how slowly.

Like so many definitions, the word 'shadow' can indeed be used to denote something portentous. There are many Biblical references to "the shadow of death" but these are employed principally as warnings or as a contrast to the light and spiritual richness beyond.

Psalms 57.1 states: *yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until [these] calamities be overpast.* More prosaically, the late George Harrison observed *all things must pass.* So they must but shadow can provide shelter and protection as well as ominous premonition.

Shadows and the brightness provides them can thus be viewed as a metaphor for the better life ahead, once the coronavirus has be vanquished. *Ade Macrow*

Caravaggio was the great master of shadow and light. The black and white thumbnail above does no justice at all to his great masterpiece 'The Calling of St Matthew' so please look it up on GOOGLE and feast your eyes. Or better still, when COVID permits, go and see it in the flesh in the French church in Rome. You need to crane your neck to see it properly in a side chapel. I'd say it is the best free show in town! RAW



March is setting out to be a strange month, we were hoping that the CEE Bill would get its second reading on the 12 March, then it was delayed to the 26 March, and then postponed without a date. The date of the 26th is going to be marked by nationwide banner drops and a twitter storm calling on MPs to support the bill, which seems the best chance of ensuring this and future governments tackle the ecological and climate crisis with the urgency required.

March 11 is planned to be the biggest ever “faith-climate day of action”, when people of faith and conscience all around the world speak out on behalf of people and planet in many different ways from “*ringing a bell, blowing the shofar or conch shell, chanting or meditating*”. The statement for ‘*Sacred People, Sacred Earth*’ speaks of the harm COVID-19 has inflicted and how it has revealed injustices and the need for a response to the pandemic and climate crisis ‘*guided by compassion, love and justice*’ and for ‘*a new culture, politics and economy of life that heals people and planet*’. It has 10 demands including respecting indigenous rights, welcoming migrants, an end to the planet’s desecration, just contributions from wealthy countries and bold faith community leadership. The full statement is found at <https://actionnetwork.org/forms/sacred-people-sacred-earth>. Signatories include Rowan Williams, Bishop Nick Holtam, Prof Azza Karam (Secretary General of Religions for Peace International), and Revd Dr James Bhagwan (General Secretary of Pacific Conference of Churches).

March is also the beginning of my court process for breaking Section 14 last September, sitting in the road in front of Parliament to demand urgent climate action and the adoption of the CEE bill. This begins with a plea hearing, and if I plead not guilty, given the action was required to call for urgent climate action which, as described by Antonio Guterres, is an existential threat, I will have a trial at a later date. *Ben Bose*



As residents of Draycott and Rodney Stoke, we have been among the first in Somerset to participate in the Mendip 'Recycle More' scheme. Somerset has always had a good record for recycling, for example last year over 65,000 tonnes of carbon were prevented from being released to atmosphere, by recycling waste instead of putting it into landfill. Yet, when spot checks were made on the contents of Somerset's rubbish bins in mid 2020, around half the contents were still found to be recyclable. So the scheme was launched to help us recycle even more, protect our environment and help tackle climate change. We are all now familiar with our extra blue recycling bags, and the growing list of recyclable items we can now leave at the kerbside, include plastic packaging, tetrapaks, electrical items and used batteries.

So how are we doing? Well, initial results, reported in January 2021 are encouraging. Comparing the first 2 months of 'Recycle More' to the 2 months before it started, Mendip residents recycled 678 extra tonnes of waste, an increase of 15%. At the same time, the rubbish put in bins fell by over 20%. 73 tonnes of light but bulky packaging have been collected which would formerly have gone to landfill but can now be recycled, enough to fill 14 double decker buses! Two tonnes of household batteries and 13 tonnes of household electrical goods have also been recycled since the scheme started. Interestingly, 'Recycle More' seems to have raised awareness of recycling generally, and there has also been a 12% increase in food waste and glass recycling. There have been concerns expressed about exporting waste, but Somerset is committed to processing recycled materials as locally as possible. In the first half of 2020, 99% of the plastic collected was processed in the UK compared with only 75% in the same period the previous year.

So it is good to know that a few minutes spent each week sorting our recycling can have such positive results.

Nikki Devitt

The return of Patricia's Pantry

Only those with tenacity can march forward in March

I am a self confessed junkie of murder mysteries, and during the early 2000s discovered the author Kathy Reichs, whose main protagonist is a forensic anthropologist, Temperance Brennan. Reichs's tenth book in the series, *Bones to Ashes*, takes place on Middle Island in Miramichi, where she investigates a series of cold cases.



Middle Island, or as the Mi'kmaq called it, Hixsenogowakun - the place for sick people - is located in the Miramichi River, approximately 2km east of downtown Chatham. It played a pivotal role as a quarantine station.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the potato famine resulted in a mass exodus of immigrants from the British Isles to North America. Passengers on these ships were crammed into cargo holds, which provided ideal conditions for the spread of deadly diseases.

One such ship, the *Looshtauk*, set sail from Liverpool to Quebec in 1847 with 462 passengers on board. By the time it had crossed the Atlantic, typhus and scarlet fever were rife. Rather than sailing to Quebec, the Captain decided to head to the nearest port - Miramichi. The ship anchored in the Bay on June 2 and the Captain sought immediate assistance from the Magistrates in

Chatham, who ordered the ship be towed up the river to Middle Island.



The Justices were totally unprepared for the magnitude of the disaster. A young doctor, John Vondy, closed his practice in order to devote his full attention to caring for the fevered passengers landed on the Island. Both

he and the Captain contracted typhus. Doctor Vondy died, although the Captain recovered and eventually sailed on to Quebec. Of the 462 passengers who embarked at Liverpool, 146 died on board and 316 were landed on Middle Island. Of those who landed, 96 died on the Island, 53 went on to Quebec and 167 stayed in Chatham.

In 1873 Middle Island was designated a permanent quarantine station and any patient on a ship showing a yellow flag indicating communicable disease onboard, was placed under quarantine at the hospital on the Island.

Today the island is a heritage site and the setting for local festivals.

Ttisha and Murray Heckbert



Are we really too “Woke”?

James Heapey, MP for the Wells Constituency and a Government Defence Minister, recently addressed an open Axbridge Deanery Synod Meeting. It was held virtually to discuss the dual topics of social exclusion and the great challenge of tackling climate change; an ambitious agenda with social exclusion receiving less attention on the day.

The concept of social exclusion is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as *‘exclusion from the prevailing social system and its rights and privileges, typically resulting from poverty or the fact of belonging to a minority social group’*. Other definitions are available but all point the same way.

However in discussing social exclusion in relation to his constituency, our MP focussed on:

1. the need to improve infrastructure i.e. transport, schools, housing etc
2. the creation of well paid, high value-added employment
3. a recognition of the disappearance of traditional industries and the need to diversify from a reliance on farming and tourism.

Valid though these points are, they did not address the issues of the marginalisation of parts of society through inequality, poverty and disadvantage nor did he consider the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Defending the government’s commitment to reach zero carbon emissions by 2050, he feared that the target of 2030 set by environmental groups would impact negatively on the disadvantaged, and he sought answers as to how this would be mitigated.

The Church’s role in society he believed was to help bring people together, with Church and community groups being better placed to meet social needs than the government as they are more humanitarian. The church’s challenge to government on social issues however seemed unwelcome. The Archbishop of Canterbury was said to be ‘too woke on occasions’.

So what is ‘woke’ anyway? The dictionary definition is

‘aware of and actively attentive to important facts and issues especially issues of racial and social justice’.

But it is now used in some political circles to denigrate those who aspire to such values. Many in faith communities would be happy to be found guilty as charged of being ‘woke’. Their challenge is to explain clearly how such a vision of creating a fairer, less unequal and less discriminatory society can be best delivered. Why do politicians so fear that?

Susannah Walker

News from Draycott and Rodney Stoke First School



As we signed off from our last article for the Parish magazine, we were pleased with how learning at school had carried on following the decision to move to remote learning. As I write this I can officially confirm that the staff at school are no longer just pleased with how things are going...we are amazed, impressed and overwhelmed with how hard the children have been working at home. Supported by a fabulous community of parents and wider family members, the children have been showing fantastic perseverance with all aspects of learning from home.

As most people will have experienced, we have had a few “can you hear us?” moments, as lessons on Zoom begin, but despite the unusual format of lessons online, the children have adapted incredibly well. Thanks to the wonders of technology, staff at school are not only able to see the children work and see work when the children hold it up, but parents are also able to upload photos of the children’s work so that staff can plan the next week’s learning. Thanks to the efforts of family members who take time, photograph and upload the children’s work, staff at school are able to comment on and praise the children for all their work at home!

As we draw closer to February half term, it’s very clear just how much a school relies on its community...whether it’s parents and family members supporting learning at home, our wonderful Church leaders providing ZOOM Collective Worships for the children at home, or the children showing real perseverance with new challenges...we couldn’t be the school we are without all of them! Thank you!

Matt Perrett

Supporters of St Peter's & Draycott with Rodney Stoke First School PTAF

Feel like a new challenge?

Looking for an easy and fun activity to do?

Then why not help SOSP and Draycott and Rodney Stoke First School PTAF create an Easter Tree in the stable on the Glebe Field?



If you or your family members are looking for something different to do during lockdown why not get yourself an "Easter Tree Challenge" sheet.

The sheet will give you all the instructions you need to make a decoration for the tree and where to return it to. There will also be quiz style activity to complete!

Just pop along to the Community shop or contact Thea, Karen, Samm Richards or Mary Watt for our adult or child challenge sheets (£1 each).

This is open to everyone in all our villages - all ages and abilities welcome - remember to pop your name on your entry for a chance to win a prize!

All money raised will go to the school PTAF fund! (sheets available from 1st March).



Mary's Recipe and Don's Poem

from 'Ye Wearie Wayfarer'



Question not, but live and labour
Till yon goal be won,
Helping every feeble neighbour,
Seeking help from none;
Life is mostly froth and bubble,
Two things stand like stone,
Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in your own.

Adam Lindsay Gordon (1833-70)

Spicy sausage, Rosemary and Bean Hot Pot



12 good quality pork sausages

2tbsp olive oil

1 large red onion cut into slim wedges

1tbsp rosemary leaves

1 small mild red chilli, deseeded & thinly sliced

4 tomatoes, roughly chopped

2x400g cans butter beans, rinsed & drained

400g can flageolet beans, rinsed & drained

600ml passata

Warm crusty bread to serve

1. Cook the sausages under a preheated hot grill for 8-10 minutes, turning occasionally, until cooked through.
2. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large saucepan, add the onion & cook over a medium heat for 3-4 minutes until slightly softened, then add the rosemary & chilli & cook for a further 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes & cook for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally, then add the passata & bring to the boil.
3. Reduce the heat, add the sausage, cover & simmer for 16 minutes, stirring occasionally, until piping hot. The sauce is thick, adding a little water if necessary. Serve with warm crusty bread.

Lent Books and Groups

Lent begins on 17 February 2021 but it is never too late to follow a Lent Course. The clergy are recommending two books:

1. **Say Yes To Life** by Ruth Valerio was commissioned last year as the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book.

The author is an environmentalist, theologian and social activist who led the launch of the Eco-church Project. The book aims to encourage churches to include care for creation in every aspect of church life thereby impacting on the lives of millions. This is quite a long, in-depth read, truly inspiring and acutely pertinent.

1. **Exploring God's Mercy** by Steven Croft (now Bishop of Oxford) is a shorter book - lighter and easier to read; described by Hilary Thomas:

You may remember the Lent Course we studied in 2011, 'Exploring God's Love' also by Steven Croft. 'Exploring God's Mercy' encourages us to consider the difference it makes to us as we receive God's kindness, and experience that kindness in our own lives. We are no longer lost, captive, sick, in danger and barren spiritually; but we are found, set free, healed, safe and fruitful.

It is recommended that you order one of these books on-line, read it at home during Lent, and, if you are able to, join us in a small group each week on ZOOM, to discuss what we are reading.

More details are in Stuart Burns Benefice E-UPDATE email of 16/1/21. Please join us and let Hilary Thomas know if you'd like to join in a ZOOM group. Her contact details are:

e: hilarythomas@uwclub.net

h: 01934-742207

Services to be held should Churches be open				
	Cheddar	Draycott	Rodney Stoke	ZOOM
7th March	10am	9.30am		11.30am
Lent 3	Holy Communion	Holy Communion		Holy Communion
14th March	10am	9.30am	11am	11.30am
Mother's Day	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer
21st March	10am	9.30am	11am	11.30am
Passion Sunday	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Holy Communion
28th March	10am	9.30am	11am	11.30am
Palm Sunday	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer

Readings March 2021			
	Psalm	First Reading	Second Reading
7th March	19:	Exodus	John
Lent 3	7-end	20: 1-17	2: 13-22
14th March	34:	1 Samuel	John
Mother's Day	11-20	1: 20-end	19: 25b -27
21st March	119:	Jeremiah	John
Passion Sunday	9-16	31: 31-34	12: 20-33
28th March	118:	Isaiah	John
Palm Sunday	1-2, 19-end	5: 1-7	12: 12-16

FROM THE REGISTERS:

Funerals:

Our prayers are with those who mourn the death of:

Chris Neave and Shirley Jeffs. RIP

Archbishops: the Church in changing times

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have recently written an article for the Spectator magazine. Selected paragraphs, downloaded from press releases, are reproduced below.



You can imagine our shock, then, when we read in the media about what is supposedly happening to our beloved church. That the parish system, with its beautiful vision of serving every inch of the country and every person in it, is being systematically dismantled. That clergy are being made redundant. That there are plans to somehow centralise everything and for services, even beyond Covid, to be online rather than in person.

So let us try to set the record straight. There are no plans to dismantle the parish network. We are committed to our calling to be a Christian presence in every community.

Far from withdrawing from the poorest areas, there is a huge effort towards growing congregations and supporting ministry in those areas — including rural areas, where we invest £10 per head of population compared with £6 per head in urban areas.

Meanwhile, the suggestion that all we do is cut back clergy numbers

pto

is not only untrue and unhelpful, it creates unnecessary anxiety. We need more clergy and they are coming forward in record numbers. And where dioceses are saving posts, it is usually through retirements.

At the General Synod this month, we will be talking about the future vision and strategy for the Church of England. And yes, we are imagining a 'mixed ecology' church — new communities alongside and emerging from established parishes; a fresh focus on chaplaincies — where so much remarkable work is being done in hospitals, prisons and so many other places; and efforts to provide for those who have come to faith online over the past year. We want there to be more church, not less.

Yes, there are hard decisions currently being made across many dioceses. Overall some stipendiary posts will be lost. But that isn't the same as making clergy redundant. The aim is to make each parish and each Christian community sustainable. If that doesn't happen, there really will be no Church of England. And to do it requires generosity and sacrifice.

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Home Communion

It is one of the great privileges in ministry to be able to bring communion to the elderly and housebound or those who are temporarily unable to get to church due to injury – do let us know if you, or someone you know, would appreciate this aspect of the Church's care. Contact the Parish Office on 01934 742535.

BENEFICE cheddardraycottandrodneystoke@gmail.com

RECTOR Stuart Burns
Email stuart.burns01@gmail.com
Home phone 01934 743649

Please note: Stuart's home tel number has a call-screening facility to stop nuisance calls; the system asks you to say your name and then press # and wait briefly ; Stuart then hears who it is and allows the call which adds your name so that next time you will go straight through; please bear with this; once added the first time you won't have to be 'processed' again! There is also an answering machine on this number.

ASSISTANT CURATE Thea Oliver 07767892313 (Thurs & Sun)
revthea@outlook.com

BENEFICE OFFICE 01934 742535

LAY/LICENSED READER Dr Chris Green

BAPTISM COORDINATOR Julie Hope 01934 742234

CHEDDAR www.standrewscheddar.org.uk

Churchwardens: Margaret Gelder 01934 710573 Paul Tullett 01934 743281

Deputy Wardens: Peter Lythgoe 01934 744074

Deanery Synod Reps : Margaret Gelder, Dawn Hill

Treasurer: Dawn Hill **Secretary:** Sylvia Hall

Cheddar Village Hall Bookings: Richard Scourse enquiries@cheddarvillagehall.org.uk

DRAYCOTT www.rodneystokewithdraycott.org.uk

Churchwardens: John English 01934 740117 Chris Green 01749 870554

Deanery Synod Reps: Tricia Lumley, Thea Oliver

Treasurer: David Cheetham **Secretary:** Chris Green

RODNEY STOKE www.stleonardsrodneystoke.org

Churchwarden: Megan James 01749 870555

Deanery Synod Reps: Jo Symes, Colin Symes

Treasurer: Sue Walker **Secretary:** Ben Bose

Church Hall Bookings: Sue Walker 01749 870611

MAGAZINE EDITORS

Cheddar: Margaret Gelder e: margaretgelder@hotmail.co.uk

Rodney Stoke & Draycott: Rob Walker e: editor.rsdparishmag@gmail.com

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