

# Wykeham Benefice News

## March 2021

*Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom,*

*Lead thou me on!*

*The night is dark, and I am far from home-*

*Lead thou me on!*

*Keep thou my feet: I do not ask to see*

*The distant scene-one step is enough for me.*

*So long thy power hath blest me, sure it still*

*Will lead me on,*

*O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till*

*The night is gone;*

*And with the morn those angel faces smile*

*Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.*

Dear friends,

This moving and beautiful poem with the title *The Pillar of Cloud*, by John Henry Newman, who as many of you might know was an English theologian and poet from the 19th century, evokes the time when Moses and the Israelites were led through the wilderness to freedom by God;

***The Lord went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people. (Exodus 13 v 21-22)***

### *Church Events for Lent and Easter*

**14<sup>th</sup> March, 10a.m. Mother's Day services** across the Benefice.

**28<sup>th</sup> March, 9.45p.m. Palm Sunday Parade and service** around Epwell.

**31<sup>st</sup> March, 7p.m. Stations of the Cross Service** at St. Anne's Church, Epwell.

**1<sup>st</sup> April, 7p.m. Maundy Thursday Eucharist** at Sibford.

**2<sup>nd</sup> April Good Friday 'Messy Church' 10a.m.** at Sibford, **Good Friday Meditation 2p.m.**

at Tadmarton, **Devotional Service 7p.m.** at Broughton.

**4th April, Easter Day services** across the Benefice.

What the poem also does I would suggest, is to shed light upon another journey into a wilderness; that of the 40 days Jesus spent being there. This time is what we mirror individually and together as a church family and as a community, during the holy season of Lent which we are in throughout March, as we prepare ourselves for Easter. At the end of the 40 days, just like at the end of Newman's poem, angels appear and look after Jesus.



In the dark moments in the wilderness Moses and the Israelites looked towards God to lead them through. They prayed individually and together, asking God to shed light upon their path. It was Jesus who would go on to describe himself by saying; ***I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life. (John 8 v 12)***

We all have individual and collective moments, no matter who we are, at some point in our life journeys, that we will need to try to discern the path to take. The direction of travel. Of maybe trying to find our way through the metaphorical wilderness we might find ourselves in, or for God's light to be shed upon those things we might need to overcome. I pray that, during this time of Lent, individually and together as a church family, as we prepare ourselves for Easter Day on the 4<sup>th</sup> April, we might know God's light to guide and strengthen us in the journey of our lives.

Love & prayers

Revd Neil

## *Village News*

### Sibford – Holy Trinity Church

We welcomed Revd. Neil on the 5<sup>th</sup> January which was a happy occasion but a very different welcome, via Zoom. I'm sure as soon as we are able there will be celebrations in the parish to welcome him, with Yorkshire Tea and Hooky Ale.

At this time there are church services in Holy Trinity on Sunday mornings Holy Communion at 9.30 a.m. and Morning Prayer at 9 a.m. on Wednesday mornings. The church continues to be locked after the Sunday service and open on Wednesday from 9 am until 3.30 p.m. for private prayer. The building is locked and in quarantine for the rest of the week as this removes the need for deep cleaning.

Reverend Neil has been appointed a Governor at Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School. Neil has many years' experience as a school governor, serving several schools in his previous parishes. We look forward to welcoming the children of the school to the church as soon as that is possible.

We are also looking forward to happier times when we can meet together now that so many of our congregation have received their first Covid vaccination. This may still be some time away but we are a people of Hope.

### **Swalcliffe – St. Peter and St. Paul’s Church**

Candlemas Evening Worship gave Swalcliffe parishioners the opportunity to meet Neil for the first time and the service was well attended. The church looking lovely with welcoming candlelight and warmth (the heating having been on for 2 days!).



We are in full swing applying for grants for repairing all the storm drainage in the churchyard and have just received the good news that the sum of £7000 has been promised from the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust.

No sooner than one problem seems to resolve another pops up! Part of the retaining wall of the churchyard has collapsed due to the immense pressure due to all the rain we have had in the past couple of years. Apparently we are by no means the only ones with this problem.

It is looking hopeful that we may be able to celebrate Easter in a more normal way .... wouldn't it be wonderful to sing again in church?

### **Shutford – St. Martin’s Church**

2021 has started quietly: St Martin’s Church is open for Sunday Worship and private prayer but with many of our usual congregation staying at home. With the rollout of the coronavirus vaccine we hope to see more people in church soon. Reverends Neil, John and Glyn have led worship with thought provoking reflections on the weekly readings with recorded music by St Martin’s Singers. Although we cannot sing, we can sit and listen and read the words of the hymns.

Snowdrops and primroses are flowering in the churchyard, despite recent cold weather, a sign that spring is not far off!

### **Tadmarton - St. Nicholas Church**

Members of our congregation who have not yet had the opportunity to meet our Rector Neil, due to self-isolating and not able to join the Zoom services, hope that we shall be able to soon.

As more of our congregation receive their vaccinations, there are hopes that the day when we can all return to our church for services and fellowship will come soon.



In the meantime I share this picture of our church so that we can be reminded and return to our times and services together.

## Broughton – St. Mary’s Church

A big thank you to Peter Smith who has made a receptacle to take the Wykeham News and is placed outside in the porch by the Notice Board.

During this lockdown we very much appreciate the Zoom services that helps to keep us in touch with one another. There are unfortunately some of our Church Family who do not have the facilities to receive Zoom services so we must keep them all in our prayers.

Thank you Rev. Neil for all you are doing during this time of shielding and uncertainty.

## Epwell – St. Anne’s Church

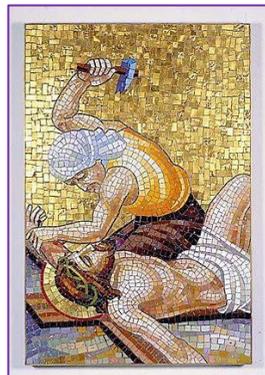
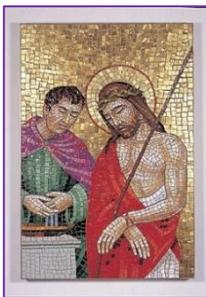
**Mothering Sunday, Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> March**

**Our Mother’s Day service takes place at 10.00am.** Although we won’t be able to offer cake, flower posies will have been prepared for all mothers so please come along to help us celebrate and give thanks for all mothers near and far.

**Holy Week in Epwell.** Holy Week begins with the **Palm Sunday service on 28th March.**

Depending on government guidance, the appropriate social distancing and the weather we hope to carry out the traditional procession round the village before the service. We would ask you to gather in the square at 9.45am ready to process at 10.00am and follow any requests made by the Churchwardens.

**The Stations of the Cross service** in Epwell is on **Wednesday 31st March at 7.00pm.** It will be a quiet and reflective occasion and as always, the PCC will ensure that any worship and carried out in St. Anne’s church follows all necessary government and Church of England guidance.



*Some Stations of the Cross*

## Other News

**Gavin’s consecration as bishop has been postponed due to Lockdown restrictions.**

Her Majesty the Queen has approved the appointment of the Ven Gavin Collins, Archdeacon of the Meon, as the next Bishop of Dorchester. Gavin, who has been an

archdeacon in our diocese since 2011, was to be consecrated as a bishop in January before taking on his new role in the Diocese of Oxford in early March.



Gavin is married to Christina, who is a health visitor. He is 53 and he has three adult children. Educated in Law at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, he then worked as a solicitor in the City of London before training for ministry at Trinity College Bristol. He was ordained in 1997 and served his curacy in Cambridge. He became Archdeacon of the Meon nine years ago.

Of his new post he said; “I am thrilled and humbled to have been invited to serve as the next Bishop of Dorchester and look forward to joining the Diocese of Oxford.” ...“My priorities in ministry have always been to enable the church to grow in unity, in confidence, in numbers and in the depth of our experience of the love of God...Throughout lockdown, churches across Oxfordshire have shown us that nothing can separate us from the love of God, and our calling to show and share that love with the communities around us. Jesus’ promise is that he came to give us life in full abundance, and, as Bishop of Dorchester, it will be a joy to play a part in helping the Church to grow into and live out that abundance of life.” The Dorchester Episcopal Area/The Diocese of Oxford is one of the largest dioceses in the Church of England. Divided into four ‘episcopal areas’, each overseen by their own area bishop. The area covers all of Oxfordshire, apart from the City of Oxford. Extending from the Cotswolds to Bicester, and down to Henley-on-Thames. There are 326 churches and 117 church schools, serving a population of over half a million people. And 70 per cent of parishes are socially active.

### *From The Children’s Society –*

#### *‘Fighting for hope for children and young people’s hope.’*

“Mothering Sunday is celebrated in churches on the fourth Sunday in Lent, 14 March in 2021. The service dates back hundreds of years to the time when people were encouraged on Laetare Sunday, to return to their home or ‘mother’ church or cathedral.”

“Increasingly, churches are aware of those for whom Mothering Sunday is a painful time and are including prayers and affirmations of care for children in all its forms, addressing issues of infertility, baby loss, childlessness, child bereavement and parental bereavement, particularly of a mother.”

“This year, many Mothering Sunday services may be taking place online as we continue to live under restrictions caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Our 2021 theme: ***Fighting for hope for children and young people.*** “

“The coronavirus pandemic has affected all our lives, but it has hit vulnerable children and young people particularly hard. They have had months out of school and often without access to online learning resources. Lockdown has trapped children at home with people who hurt and abuse them, and our research shows lockdown has made some children more vulnerable to criminal exploitation and online grooming. As their mental health and well-being suffers, many children are losing hope. “

“Over the last 15 years, The Children’s Society has studied and reported on children’s well-being. And each year we have seen a consistent decline, which has only worsened as a result of the pandemic. We don’t think that’s acceptable – which is why we have launched our ambitious goal of overturning that decline by 2030. To find out more about our 2030 goal and



the gospel values it is rooted in, please watch this video talk by our Chief Executive, Canon Mark Russell: [vimeo.com/501682834](https://vimeo.com/501682834).



### *A message from Christian Aid*

Many of us are so grateful having received a first vaccination and would like to show gratitude. There is a chance to do this by donating to Christian Aid or similar charities.

*Christian Aid comment, "As more of our family, friends, and neighbours receive their*

*vaccine, we are both joyful and relieved. But we are aware that many communities around the world are suffering and don't have access to vaccines. And many of them lack the basics they need to protect themselves like clean water for handwashing. As you or a family member is protected, please consider giving to help provide the basics, like clean water for handwashing to those who don't have access to vaccines."*

**(See how your prayers can help in the Prayer section of the newsletter).**

Thank you. [www.christianaid.org.uk/give/give-money](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/give/give-money) Thank you, Barbara (Sibford)

### *Readings for March, Holy Week and Easter*

	Old Testament	New Testament	The Gospel	Liturgical Colour
<b>Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March</b> <b>Third Sunday of Lent</b>	Exodus 20 1 - 7	1 Corinthians 1: 18 - 25	John 2: 13 - 22	
<b>Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March</b> <b>Mothering Sunday,</b> Family Services	Exodus 2: 1-10 or 1Samuel 1: 20 – end	2 Corinthians 1: 3 - 7 or Colossians 3: 12 - 17	Luke 2: 33 - 35 or John 19: 25b - 27	
<b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March</b> <b>Fifth Sunday of Lent</b> <b>Passion Sunday</b>	Jeremiah 31: 31 - 34	Hebrews 5: 5 - 10	John 12: 20 - 33	
<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March</b> <b>Palm Sunday</b>	Liturgy of the Psalms: Mark 11: 1 – 11	Philippians 2: 5 - 11	Passion Reading Mark 15: 1 - 39	
<b>Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April</b>	Exodus 12: 1 – 4 (5 - 10), 11 - 14	1 Corinthians 11: 23 - 26	John 13: 1 – 17, 31b - 35	
<b>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> April</b> <b>Easter Day</b>	Isaiah 25: 6 - 9	Acts 10: 34- 35	Mark 16: 1 - 8	



## Lent sessions with Reverend Neil Bowler

Neil is holding two different events for Lent via Zoom. A **Lent Discussion Group**,

**\*Growing Together in our Christian Faith** on Thursday evenings at 6.30 and 7.30 p.m.

**COME  
AND  
SEE**

**\*Our Lenten journey through Art**, Monday evenings at 6.30 p.m.

Each talk stands alone so do not worry if you can't make them all.

### Prayer and more Lent resources:

**The Ven Gavin Collins**, new Bishop of Dorchester. Please hold our new bishop and his family in your prayers, while starting his ministry and awaiting his consecration.

Also for all mothers on Mothering Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and for the work connected to Mother's Day through the '**The Children's Society**'. Please pray for the continued success in supporting children living in poverty or domestic abuse. The Society has a webpage about how churches can support them, at [childrenssociety.org.uk/how-you-can-help/support-in-church](http://childrenssociety.org.uk/how-you-can-help/support-in-church), where you may find a downloadable "Mothering Sunday resource", and also a form to sign up for their monthly prayer email." (Scroll to the bottom of the page on their website).

Prayer Chain for **Christian Aid, Climate Justice**. "They tell us that this year is crucial in the struggle for climate justice. To rise to the challenge, we must underpin it in prayer. Pray for us to understand God's care for those who are most affected by the climate crisis, acknowledge our role in causing it and how we can start anew."

"Due to the pandemic, 2020 the UN climate talks, COP26 are now postponed until November 2021... But the struggle for climate justice remains urgent and essential. Pray every day through the prayer chain until the conference is completed."

Find out how it works, go to: [christianaid.org.uk/pray/prayer-chain](http://christianaid.org.uk/pray/prayer-chain)

**During Lent**, please remember to pray for those with Christian authority who guide us through lent, Reverend Neil Bowler, Reverend John Tattersall and all the assisting clergy who devotedly support our Benefice.

For yourselves to find your faith restored while learning to grow for God's service.

For Lenten Groups and 'Come and See' activities throughout the Benefice.

Prayer for the Nation. A daily prayer at 6p.m. remembering the sad passing of over 100,00 lives lost since the start of Covid 19. [Prayer for the nation | The Church of England](#)

*There are many other resources to help you through Lent, including these:*

**The Church of England's Lent campaign** - [#LiveLent](#) ([bit.ly/3qNN15y](https://bit.ly/3qNN15y)), *God's Story, Our Story* – explores how Christians can share their faith with others. The material is based on the themes explored in this year's Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book, [Living His Story - Hannah Steele - SPCK](#)

**Pray as you Go**, holds 7-10 minute daily meditation with a bible reading, reflections and beautiful music of all nationalities and styles. Plus there is a Lenten retreat, 'Grow back better'. This is run by Jesuit priests based on sound Christian theology. [pray-as-you-go.org](http://pray-as-you-go.org)

## Services for March, Holy Week and Eastern-Subject to Covid 19 Restrictions

Zoom Services: Sunday H.C. at 6pm and Wednesday Evening Prayer at 6 pm

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> March <b>Lent 3</b>	Broughton	10 a.m.	Benefice Eucharist	NB
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> March <b>Lent 4</b> <b>Mothering Sunday</b>	Sibford	8 a.m.	Holy Communion BCP	NB
	Epwell	10 a.m.	Family Service	NB
	Sibford	10 a.m.	Family Service	JT
	Broughton	11 a.m.	Family Service	JT
	Tadmarton	11 a.m.	Family Service	NB
	Shutford	4.30 p.m.	Family Service	JT
	Swalcliffe	4.30 p.m.	Family Service	NB
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> March <b>Lent 5</b> <b>Passion Sunday</b>	Broughton	8 a.m.	Holy Communion BCP	NB
	Sibford	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	NB
	Swalcliffe	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	JT
	Epwell	9.45 a.m.	Holy Communion	DP
	Broughton	11 a.m.	Morning Praise	NB
	Shutford	11 a.m.	Morning Praise	Lay led
	Tadmarton	11 a.m.	Holy Communion BCP	JT
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> March <b>Lent 6</b> <b>Palm Sunday</b>	Epwell	9.45 a.m.	Procession of Palms & Benefice Eucharist	NB
<b>Holy Week</b>				
Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> March	Sibford	6 p.m.	Holy Week Evening Worship	NB
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> March	Tadmarton	10 a.m.	Holy Week Communion	NB
	Sibford	6 p.m.	Holy Week Evening Worship	
Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Epwell	7 p.m.	Stations of the Cross	NB
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> April <b>Maundy Thursday</b>	Sibford	7 p.m.	Benefice Eucharist and washing of feet	NB
Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April <b>Good Friday</b>	Sibford VH	10 a.m.	Messy Church	NB/JT
	Tadmarton	2 p.m.	Good Friday meditation	NB
	Broughton	7 p.m.	Devotional Service	
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> April <b>Easter Day</b>	Swalcliffe	6 a.m.	First Communion of Easter	NB
	Sibford	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	MC
	Shutford	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	NB
	Epwell	9.45 a.m.	Holy Communion	JT
	Broughton	11 a.m.	Holy Communion	JT
	Swalcliffe	11 a.m.	Holy Communion	NB
	Tadmarton	11a.m.	Holy Communion	NB

*Please send your news for the April edition by 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021*

*Carolyn Koch de Gooreynd, Editor: [carolyn.kdeg@zen.co.uk](mailto:carolyn.kdeg@zen.co.uk)*