

## CHURCH SERVICES

### Wednesday 1st May

18.00 Whitchurch Evening Prayer/Compline.

### Sunday 5th May

08.30 Welsh Newton Meditation and Bible Study

09.30 Bishopswood Big Breakfast at the Village Hall.

09.30 Ganarew Holy Communion (Common Worship).

10.00 Llangrove Holy Communion

11.00 Llangarron Holy Communion

11.00 Whitchurch Holy Communion.

11.00 Wyesham Sunday Praise.

### Ascension Day Thursday 9th May

10.30 Whitchurch Holy Communion.

### Sunday 12th May

08.30 Welsh Newton Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

10.00 Llangrove Community Service

10.00 Marstow All Age Praise

11.00 Goodrich Holy Communion

11.00 Bishopswood Holy Communion (at the Village Hall).

11.00 Whitchurch Holy Communion.

11.00 Wyesham Sunday Praise.

18.00 Welsh Newton Prayer Service

### Thursday 16th May

10.30 Whitchurch Holy Communion.

*May services continued page 43*

# BORDER NEWS

*Wye Reaches and Wye Brooks Parish Magazine*

*Produced by volunteers for the community*



**ST SWITHIN'S, GANAREW**

**MAY 2024**



Stay in touch

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01989 770454

benbentham@yahoo.co.uk

**Associate Minister** - Licensed to Wye Brooks Benefice

**Revd Simon Tarlton** 07462 893457    simon.tarlton@gmail.com

**Retired Priests** - Supporting our Benefices

**Revd Penny Powdrill** 01600 714096    pennypowdrill@btinternet.com

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**WYE REACHES**

www.wyereaches.org

**Vicar**

**Revd Tim Starling**

07980204572

revtimstarling@gmail.com

**CHURCH SERVICES Cont'd**

**Pentecost Sunday 19th May**

08.30 Welsh Newton    Meditation and Bible Study

09.30 Ganarew    Sunday Praise.

10.00 Llangrove    Holy Communion

11.00 Goodrich    All Age Praise

11.00 Whitchurch    Holy Communion.

11.00 Wyesham    Holy Communion.

18.00 Llangarron    Evening Prayer

**Thursday 23rd May**

10.30 Whitchurch    Holy Communion

**Friday 24th May**

18.00 Whitchurch    Taize Service

**Trinity Sunday 26th May**

08.30 Welsh Newton    Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

10.00 Llangrove    Community Service

10.00 Marstow    All Age Praise

11.00 Goodrich    Holy Communion

11.00 Dixton    Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

11.00 Whitchurch    Sunday Praise.

11.00 Wyesham    Wyesham Together service on the village green with Monmouth Brass Band.

18.00 Welsh Newton    Prayer Service

**Please submit material for next month's issue NO LATER than 8th of the month to your parish correspondent**

*The email address for each correspondent can be found in the Parish News pages*

*The Editorial Team can be contacted via [bneditor@mail.com](mailto:bneditor@mail.com)*

**Our Border News Advertising Manager Bobby can be contacted on 01989 770256 or via [bnads@mail.com](mailto:bnads@mail.com)**

Bible readings for each month can now be found on the

Wye Reaches Website

[www.wyereaches.org/lectionary-reading](http://www.wyereaches.org/lectionary-reading)

or contact your Church Warden for more details.



## **Thy Kingdom Come Prayer Vigil** **9<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

This year more than a million Christians worldwide will be joining in long-distance prayer between Ascension Day to Pentecost.

What started in 2016 with the Archbishops of Canterbury and York inviting the CofE to pray, has grown into an annual international and ecumenical call to 11 days of specific prayer that more people will come to know Jesus.

According to the organisers of Kingdom Come, the movement is now in nearly 90% of countries worldwide and spread among 85 different denominations and traditions.

Kingdom Come explains that it encourages: "Every person, household, and church to pray that those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and His love for the world, will hear it for themselves and respond and follow Him.

"Specifically, we again invite each Christian to pray that God's Spirit might work in the lives of five people whom they know, who have not responded with their 'Yes' to God's call."

Whether you have joined in 'Thy Kingdom Come' before or not, you are invited to take part this year. Archbishop Justin Welby says: "In praying 'Thy Kingdom Come' we all commit to playing our part in the renewal of the nations and the transformation of communities."

### **Thought For May**

The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light; but the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.

Isaiah 60:1

## **WELCOME FROM YOUR CLERGY TEAM**

Dear Friends

I am writing this on 9th April when there is excitement about the total solar eclipse in the US.

I have experienced a total solar eclipse, in 2002, on the Zimbabwe/South Africa border. We drove five hours overnight there we waited in the early morning. It was thrilling. Darkness crept up on us, the black moon blocked the sun, then there was the 'diamond ring' effect, and the light then returned. I can tell you that it was worth the long drive.

'Eclipse' comes from two ancient Greek words, ek meaning 'out', and leipein meaning 'to leave'. So an eclipse is when the thing which somehow defines and dominates our worldly existence, is left out of the picture momentarily, blocked by something else and it is dark for a while. The good thing about eclipses is that they are temporary. We'd be in a mess if they weren't.

It may be appropriate to talk about eclipses as an illustration of faith and life too. God is the one who defines and controls, not just our world, but the whole universe, and yet many of us seem to want him obscured from the picture, putting other things, like self or wealth in the way. Christ is the one who bought us back from sin and death, but many imagine that God will somehow be pleased with our flawed good works or our church attendance, shoving Christ out of the picture. Too many of, it seems to me, are happy with a situation where God, or Christ if you like, can be glimpsed at the edges of our lives, but not in the centre.

Eclipses are good as an occasional spectacle, but not as reality. Lives where Christ is obscured, or on the edge, need a fully visible Christ in the middle.

*Ben*



**REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS  
THIS MONTH**

**As we welcome**

Carys Elizabeth Gort, baptized at Goodrich, on 7<sup>th</sup> April

**Pray for the souls and lives of**

Valerie Veale, aged 77, of Caerphilly, funeral held at Welsh Newton on 10<sup>th</sup> April.

Margaret Bailey, aged 86, of Ruxton, funeral held at Marstow on 25<sup>th</sup> April.

Eva Cos whose funeral was at St Dubricius church, Whitchurch, on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

**Prayers for the month**

Let us not forget all those around the world living through conflict and war, and pray their faith will keep them safe and strong;

All those living with illness, and their loved ones as they face the challenges each new day brings;

And as we welcome the blossom of May, and the beauty of late Spring, we also welcome Your Holy Spirit afresh, as we celebrate Pentecost.

At the rising of Your sun Lord God, Creator of light, at the rising of Your sun each morning, let the greatest of all lights, Your love, rise, like the sun, within my heart.

Our simple prayer leaflet, to help you engage in prayer, can be picked up in any of the Wye Reaches churches, downloaded from the Wye Reaches website [wyereaches.org/2023-year-of-prayer/](http://wyereaches.org/2023-year-of-prayer/) or by contacting Rev Tim Starling ([revtimstarling@gmail.com](mailto:revtimstarling@gmail.com) or 07980204572) who will send you the information.



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**Mouse Makes**

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he told his disciples  
 "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit  
 has come upon you, and you will be my  
 witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea  
 and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."  
 ...When the day of Pentecost arrived,  
 they were all together in one place,  
 and they were all filled  
 with the Holy Spirit."

1 After Jesus ascended into heaven, which  
 city did the Spirit descend upon? (Acts 1:7)  
 2 What were the disciples doing when the  
 Spirit came? (Acts 1:14)  
 3 Why were they so happy? (Acts 1:14)  
 4 What special day was it? (Acts 2:1)

5 What tongue came upon them? (Acts 2:2)  
 6 What appeared? (Acts 2:2-3)  
 7 What were the tongues like? (Acts 2:3)  
 8 What did they start speaking? (Acts 2:4)  
 9 Who spoke to the crowd? (Acts 2:14)  
 10 Who had prepared for? (Acts 2:16)



## A Message from the Bishop's Palace

Dear Friends

May marks the end of the Easter season and the beginning of what is affectionately known as 'ordinary time' in the Church calendar. The pivot happens at the feast of Pentecost on May 19th this year. Every Sunday is always a celebration of the resurrection, so its hard to see what is ordinary about it. The events of the Christ's death and resurrection are the turning point of history. It is a world-shattering event that means life can never be the same again. The book of Acts tells us how the disciples' lives were turned upside down by it. In their grief at the loss of Jesus a number were considering returning to their previous occupations. Once they encountered the risen Lord, they decided to change the world instead!

However, it was not just historical events which changed things. It was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Christian faith has always been a supernatural one. In the struggles to fill rotas, find volunteers, maintain buildings and serve our communities we can easily forget this. If the Christian life was just a set of rules to obey, religious acts to observe and an institution to maintain, it would not have lasted very long.

Trusting in the Holy Spirit to empower and lead is less safe than seeking to control events ourselves. Periodically in the history of the Church the Holy Spirit has broken through in ways that have upended our conventional way of doing things. It happened in the Wesleyan revival of the 18th century, numerous mini revivals in the church (of which some happened in our diocese) and in the great outpouring in Azusa Street in 1906 that gave birth to Pentecostalism. This is now the third largest stream in the Church today. In many ways it is hard to see how our current institutional predicament can be served by strategic

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thinking alone. I am praying for another (likely messy!) outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Diocese of Hereford. Only the Holy Spirit can give us the courage we need for the evangelistic challenge. Only the Holy Spirit can turn the hearts of those currently indifferent to Christian things to help see their need for the Lord. So, 'Come Holy Spirit and kindle the hearts of your people with the fire of your love'. Today, we need that more than ever.

+Richard

Bishop of Hereford



## THE TRUTH OF THE ASCENSION

BY CANON PAUL HARDINGHAM

Ascension Day is traditionally celebrated on a Thursday, the fortieth day of [Easter](#), and commemorates the Christian belief of the bodily [Ascension of Jesus](#) into Heaven. This year it falls on Thursday 9th May.

The Ascension is a hugely neglected festival, which deserves to have a bigger place in our church life. How do we understand it?

*The Ascension tells us that Jesus is in control: 'Jesus has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand'* (1 Peter 3:22). Jesus occupies the top spot in the universe; the control of our world is in the safe, scarred hands of Jesus. We can offer Him our worship and allegiance, knowing that His plans are better than those of any Prime Minister or President.

*The Ascension tells us that God is committed to His world: 'And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus'* (Ephesians 2:6). Jesus did not leave His humanity behind when He ascended, for we are raised with Christ to heaven. Therefore, God is bound to His world and we can trust Him to fulfil His purposes for our lives and world.

Cont'd...

The Ascension gives us a job to do: 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations' (Matthew 28:18,19). God's way of working in the world is through us. He commissions us for this task at the Ascension and equips us at Pentecost. We are called to make disciples, starting in our workplace, family and community.

'Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which He blesses all the world.' (Teresa of Avila).

Interestingly, in Germany Ascension Day coincides with Father's Day as they celebrate Jesus returning to the Holy Father



### THE VENERABLE BEDE — GREAT HISTORIAN

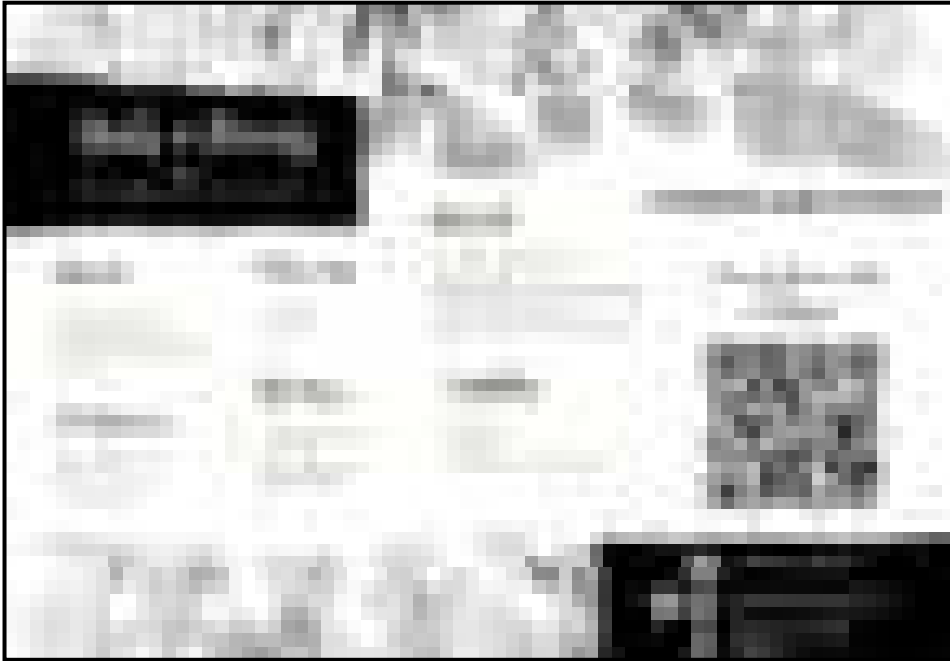
The Venerable Bede was an outstanding scholar who accomplished several 'firsts'. He was the first historian to date events from the birth of Christ. He was the first person to write scholarly works in the English language. And, of course, his world-famous, magisterial *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, completed in 731, is still in print today.

Bede was born in about 673, and sent as a child to Wearmouth monastery, and then later transferred to the monastery at Jarrow. His was a quiet life: he probably never travelled further than Lindisfarne to the north, and York to the south. In about 692 Bede was ordained deacon, and then, in about 703, he was priested.

Bede once described his own life: "I have devoted my energies to a study of the Scriptures, observing monastic discipline, and singing the daily services in church: study, teaching and writing have always been my delight." It sounds unremarkable, but Bede's fruitfulness has been extravagant: his writings have informed and influenced millions of people over 14 centuries.

Cont'd...





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As a theologian, Bede translated the Gospel of John into Old English, completing it on the very day that he died. He also wrote commentaries on various books of the Bible.

But Bede's outstanding gift was as an historian. His *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* is one of the most important sources that we have for understanding early English history. Bede was scrupulous in his use of sources, clearly identifying them. He also was careful to distinguish between fact, hearsay and legend. He had a healthy scepticism, and certainly did not believe that everything he was told was necessarily true.

His *Ecclesiastical History* tells the history of Britain up to the year 729. It starts with the story of the Celtic peoples, who converted to Christianity in the first three centuries after the death of Christ. Bede then moves on to the invasion of Britain by the pagan Anglo-Saxons, in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries. They themselves were in turn converted by Celtic missionaries from the north and the west, and by Roman missionaries coming up from the south and the east.

Bede himself lived during the time of the Anglo-Saxon church, of which he was a wise observer of its various problems. He urged that episcopal visitations, confirmations, and Holy Communions should be held more frequently – for the good of the Church.

Bede died on Thursday, May 26 735 during the Feast of the Ascension and was buried at Jarrow. His feast day is 25th May.

### **A Quiet Moment of Reflection**

Great faith is not the faith that walks always in the light and knows no darkness, but the faith that perseveres, in spite of God's seeming silence, and that faith will most certainly and surely get its rewards. –  
*Fr Andrew SDC*



## Hereford St Ethelbert's May Fair

The historic May Fair at Hereford has been celebrated for over 900 years, and it begins with a distinctive opening ceremony featuring a large party of dignitaries.

Originally a hiring fair and point of sale for livestock and goods, it's now mainly a funfair with rides and stalls running from the Tuesday to Thursday following the May Day Bank Holiday.

The unique custom that marks the start of proceedings is the official proclamation and opening ceremony in which the Mayor offers the Bishop twelve-and-a-half bushels of wheat; the wheat arrives nowadays on a trailer at which point the Mayor tells the history of the Fair and retells of ancient conflict between the civic party and the bishopric, which continued until in the nineteenth century the running of the fair was granted to the corporation. The wheat is paid to the bishop to compensation for the loss of rights over the fair and represents a wish for harmony between the parties, and a continuation of ancient practice. The civic party inspect the sacks of wheat and weigh one out into a bushel measure to show to the Bishop, who will bless the Fair, then the Mayor reads out the Proclamation. Representatives of the Showmen's Guild also make speeches and the Bishop rings the Fair Bells to officially open the event, before the civic party tour the fair and maybe try a few of the rides and sideshows. The rides operate in the streets of the city centre for the next few days including the Thursday evening.

This year the fair will run from Tuesday 7th to Thursday 9th May.



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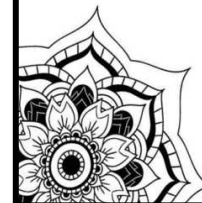
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## Tulips, Faith and Gardens



Tulips are in abundance this month, and symbolize perfect love and affection. The inherent meanings associated with tulips change with the colour of the bloom: red tulips represent true love, purple symbolizes royalty, yellow conveys cheerful thoughts, and white tulips signify forgiveness.

Tulips are significant in several religious and spiritual traditions, particularly in Christianity and Islam. In Christianity, tulips have been used in religious artwork to symbolize a love for God, with different colours representing different aspects of faith. For instance, red tulips can symbolize the blood of Jesus, white tulips can signify purity and forgiveness, and purple tulips can represent the royalty of God the King.

Tulips are highly regarded in Turkish and Persian cultures, which have strong ties to Islam, as they are a symbol of Allah. In these cultures the flower is often seen in designs and artworks related to Islamic culture, whilst in Turkey, the tulip is considered a symbol of paradise on earth, making it a powerful and spiritual emblem.

In the Bible, tulips are often used to represent the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is because the bloom of a tulip resembles a cup, which symbolizes renewal and rebirth, and the three petals of a tulip are said to represent the Holy Trinity.

Tulips are also seen as a symbol of faith and divine promise. In today's modern world, tulips are often seen as a symbol of the Christian faith and a reminder of the promises of God. They are a symbol of hope, comfort, and faith, as well as a reminder of the beauty of creation and the joys of life. This is perhaps why tulips are a popular flower to have in church whilst they are available.

It's not just flowers that lift our spirits. Studies post Covid, including the largest undertaken, found that people who spent time in the garden report better physical and mental health levels than those who do not. We are a nation of gardeners, and garden visitors, so if over the coming months you fancy admiring someone else's hard work there are gardens open in our area including:

Monmouth Gardens on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May; Usk Open Gardens on Saturday and Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> June; Poole Cottage on Coppit Hill on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June; Old Grove, Llangrove on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August; and St Michael's Hospice have their annual Open Gardens season which runs throughout the summer.

More details of Open Gardens can be found on the websites of the National Garden Scheme and the St Michael's Hospice



## from across our Parishes

### BISHOPSWOOD

**Cafe Bishopswood Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> 10.00 am to Midday** Plants swap Delicious cakes and refreshments (Gluten free available)

**Skittles Evening Friday 24<sup>th</sup> 7:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.** £8.50 per person – including Jacket potato with choice of fillings **Booking only Event** – 01600 891277 or email [treasurer@bvonline.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@bvonline.co.uk)

My thanks to Eileen who has stepped down as Bishopswood's representative for providing me with not only the latest news and events, but also some wonderful articles over the past few years. *Ed*

### WYESHAM

Jo Townsend & Marguerite Gordon

jotown223@hotmail.com marguerite.gordon@btinternet.com

May in Wyesham brings **Wyesham Together Week, 20th - 26th**, which this year focuses on Kymin View School and the theme 'Spring - the World Coming to Life'. with activities in the School from Monday to Friday led by the Rev. Tim, with Ann and Frank from Wyesham Christian Fellowship, followed on **Friday 19th** by a **party on the Green from 3.30 - 5pm**, open to anyone from Wyesham, with crafts, activities, a bouncy castle and refreshments. Follow the Sunflower Trail throughout the week with prizes to be won! The week is rounded off on **Sunday 26th at 11am** with a **Service on the Green**, taken by the Rev. Tim and accompanied by a brass band. Every home in Wyesham will receive an invitation to join the festivities and we are looking to build on the success of Wyesham Together 2023.

Other events for May in *St James' Community Hall* are;

**Saturday 4th, Wyedean Embroiderers** 10am - 3pm

**Monday 13th Women's Institute** 7pm

**Friday 19th Quiz Night** 7pm

**Monday 20th WI Craft Group** 7pm

**Pilates and Tai Chi every Wednesday** 9.30 - 11.45am

**St James' Church Coffee Morning** is on **Saturday 25th 10am**



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## LLANGARRON

Helen Edwards [edwardshelen82@gmail.com](mailto:edwardshelen82@gmail.com)

[www.llangarron.info](http://www.llangarron.info) & Facebook Llangarron Village Hall

**Pop-up Pub Night and Pizza Van or Pulled Pork Rolls Friday 3rd 6.00 – 9.00pm** Caire Williams will be in the car park serving her delicious pizzas from 6.00pm. Pulled pork rolls may also be on offer.

**The Llangarron Community Cafe, Saturday 18th from 10.30am - 12.30pm**  
Regular slot on the third Saturday of the month. Well behaved dogs and their human companions are very welcome to attend the cafe.

**Village Quiz Night - Saturday 18th starting at 7.00pm** Teams of 6 please, book your tables by emailing [hello@Llangarron.info](mailto:hello@Llangarron.info). Puddings will be served during the interval and a raffle will be held in support of the PCC and LCA.

**Evening Talk Thursday 23rd at 7.00pm in collaboration with ACEG – We are Farming Minds**

Emily Jones, Project Manager for We are Farming Minds, will be coming to talk to us about the services WAFM offer to farmers and landowners in Herefordshire. ACEG has recently heard from farmers who have experience of supporting their neighbours when they are struggling and also having to support their own family members with mental health problems. All donations will go to supporting this very important local charity.

## DIXTON

Kate Richards - [kate@summerleas.com](mailto:kate@summerleas.com)

Once again we have managed to avoid flooding – alerts were issued and the levels remain high but it seems as if we might be lucky if it (finally!) stops raining! We have been quite busy at Dixton with various visitors, including a party of around 30 who were on a Churches Tour around Monmouthshire with Tim Bridges. The same group came last year, and we like to think that they were so impressed by our catering that they decided to return. The party enjoyed teas, coffees and snacks while listening to a talk on the history of the church.

The PCC has taken the difficult decision to reduce the number of services at St Peter's to one a month, and this will be the **11am on the fourth Sunday** from now on. This means that the next service will be on **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>** and we hope that some of you might be able to join us.

## GOODRICH

Marlene Corker marlenecorker@yahoo.co.uk

### St. Giles Church

Those who attended our **Lent lunch** enjoyed the home-made soup, company and reflective words shared by Reverend Simon Tarlton. Thank you to those who helped on the day and who donated generously. £130 has been sent to the Ross Food Larder.

**Mowing season** is upon us again! Any fit parishioners who can possibly spare an hour or two, now and then, please contact Rev Simon Tarlton. All help is very much appreciated. We will be observing "No Mow May" for large sections of the churchyard this month, to allow wildlife to thrive.

Have you ever fancied having a go at **campanology**!? If so, please contact Rev Simon, or Helen on 07508320111. We would very much like to set up some bell ringing "taster sessions", at St Giles, in the coming months. These are sure to be informative and a lot of fun!

### Goodrich C of E Primary School

On Wednesday, **Open the Book** was dressed and ready to go. Unfortunately, they only needed one volunteer and a Year 6 child was chosen. Before they started, they reminded us of the Last Supper and told us that the next part of the story, which they sat in a semi-circle to tell, was one of the saddest in the **Bible**. After the sad part, when Jesus died on the cross, they told and performed Jesus coming back to life and how this must have been a wonderful moment. At the end, we reflected, listened to a prayer and sang a song.

*Written by Peregrine Class*

### Village Hall Events

**Flicks in the Sticks Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> The Taste of Things.** Starring Juliette Binoche and Benoit Magimel. This is a feel-good romantic period movie, shown in French with English subtitles (12A) £5 Doors open at 7pm. The bar will be open serving refreshments including tea and coffee.

The Village Hall now operates a policy of "Only alcohol bought on the premises can be consumed on the premises".

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## LLANGROVE

Wendy Price Wendyllangrove@gmail.com,  
www.llangrove.org uk & llangrovelinks@yahoo.co.uk

**Food Bank** in porch of Christ Church, accessible to all. Please add to, if you can, and help yourself as needed.

Many thanks to all those who joined us for our **Easter Weekend** activities. They were thoughtful, intriguing, exciting and uplifting for all age groups.

**Volunteers needed** 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> 9.30a.m. at Tretawdy Nature reserve.

**Llangrove May Fayre is on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> 12** until 4p.m. when the village gets together to put on a traditional May Celebration with food, drink, country crafts, lambs, games and activities for all ages on the field at Llangrove Academy to raise money for local charities. Once again there will be **Maypole dancing** - this year with a new Maypole! - a demonstration by local firefighters and much more. There will be a **Pet Photo competition** so bring a photo of yours and win prizes! Entrance fee £1 an adult, children go free. Sorry no dogs in the school grounds apart from Therapy dogs. If you can help at all on the day, please contact Wendy.

**Coffee Morning in Llangrove Village Hall on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> at 10.30a.m.** Bring and Buy Stall. Raffle. Good company!

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> 2- 4.30p.m. Repair Cafe** at Llangrove Village Hall with knowledgeable people to help mend necessary and much-loved items.

**Llangrove & District Gardening Society: Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>** join us for our **Plant Sale and Cream Teas 2-4pm** Llangrove Village Hall. Free admission.

Next talk is on **6<sup>th</sup> June** - time to think about entries for our **Annual Show (17<sup>th</sup> August)** with an evening of judging tips from our flower and vegetable judge Phil Dennis. Talks start at 7.30pm in Llangrove village hall. Admission for visitors £4 which **includes** refreshments. More details contact Jo on 07718 229813 **All welcome.**

**ACEG** - Join us at The Garron Centre on **Thursday 23rd at 7.00pm.** when Emily Jones, Project Manager for We are **Farming Minds** will be coming to talk to us about the services WAFM offer to farmers and landowners in Herefordshire.

We are currently helping with a **raised bed project** at Llangrove Academy and we need topsoil, please if anyone has surplus to requirements. Please contact Wendy.

## WHITCHURCH

Brigid Hamilton-Jones [brigidhj@aol.com](mailto:brigidhj@aol.com)

**Holiday season teas at St Dubricius:** These will be on the bank holiday weekends (Sunday and Monday afternoons) of **5th and 6th and 26th and 27th, 2-4pm**. Visitors and residents are all very welcome.

**Compline: Wednesday 1st, 6pm** in St Dubricius.

**Taizé Service: Friday 24th, 6pm** in St Dubricius.

**Community coffee mornings: Wednesdays 1st and 15th** at St Dubricius, **10.30-12.00pm**.

**Community Lunches: Mondays 13th and 27th 12 noon** at St Dubricius. Please phone Margaret on 01600 890397 to book your place.

**Sticky Little Fingers: every Tuesday** during term time in Whitchurch Primary School, 9.30-11am. Pre-school children and babies with their parents and carers are very welcome.

**Knit and Natter:** every **Thursday** in St Dubricius, **2pm**.

**Craft Club and Games Club:** not meeting in May.

**Whitchurch Floral Society: Wednesday 1st, 2pm** at The Old Court Hotel Crafting Workshop with Kathy Langham. Everyone welcome. Visitors £8.00 (to include refreshments). Please contact Wendy Cogger on 01600 890141

### Events at Whitchurch and Ganarew Memorial Hall

**ShortMat Bowls:** every **Thursday afternoon**, between 1.45pm and 4.00pm. Come along and have a free first visit to try it out. Contact Geoff Ludlow for more information: 07429 450533.

**Jeremy Huggett Music, The Chosen 5, Saturday 18th, 7.30pm** (doors open at 7pm).

Enjoy a mixture of traditional and mainstream jazz with the odd hint of blues and a selection of Bossa Novas. Jeremy Huggett leads on Saxes, Flute and Vocals. Making their debut at our Jazz Club, the band's lively repertoire guarantees that this will be a swinging session that is definitely not to be missed! Tickets £15.00. Licensed bar. Contact 07768 125452.

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Sue Rolfe [rolfe653@btinternet.com](mailto:rolfe653@btinternet.com) Tel: 07971 411020  
Website: [marstowchurch.org](http://marstowchurch.org)

**Easter Day**

A record congregation gathered in the Churchyard, at 6.00 a.m. on a glorious March morning, to welcome Easter with a simple Communion service. The Hot Cross buns and coffee, served after the service in the West End, were much enjoyed. What a wonderful start to Easter.

**ST MATTHEW'S WEST END EVENTS**

**Board Games evenings, Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>, 7.00 p.m.**

First of our monthly meet-ups this year. A fun evening, games and wine provided. No charge. Don't be shy, we'd love to have your company

**Opening Beautiful Gardens, Friday 17<sup>th</sup>, 7.00 p.m.**

An illustrated talk about the Yellow Book Open Gardens Scheme. See separate advertisement for details. Tickets £5.00, phone Sue 07971 411020/ Phyll 07717 126596

**Marstow Makers Craft Evening, Monday 20<sup>th</sup>, 7.00 p.m.**

An evening learning how to make rag rugs. Come and join us, meet your neighbours, enjoy a social evening and a glass of wine. No charge.

**Marstow Parish Council meeting, Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup>, 7.30 p.m.**

See "Tulips, Faith and Gardens", on page 11, for details of a selection of gardens opening locally.

For full details of Open Gardens you may find the following websites useful:

Open Gardens 2024 - St Michaels Hospice ([st-michaels-hospice.org.uk](http://st-michaels-hospice.org.uk))

Home - National Garden Scheme ([ngs.org.uk](http://ngs.org.uk))



## Prayer for Schools Fortnight – 6<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> May

Our local schools are busy places, and draw in many people, especially students, teachers, governors, parents, caterers, and school grounds support services. These people need our prayer, as they face many daily challenges.

And so it was that four years ago a network made up of Churches Together England, CARE, Youth for Christ, Scripture Union, New Generation, the Association of Christian Teachers, came together to launch the Prayer for Schools Fortnight.

It now exists to promote prayer for schools in partnership with prayer groups, churches and Christian organisations. The vision is to see all 30,000 schools in the UK being regularly prayed for.

The theme this year is Running the Race, based on Hebrews 12, and highlighting the perseverance and team mentality needed for schools to operate successfully.

Mike Simmonds, director and education consultant of Go Ministries which supports governors in schools, said: "Schools have almost always been at the heart of the Church's mission. Praying for teachers, other staff, governors, and children must surely underpin our hopes and vision that the next generation will flourish in every way possible.

"For most, school will be the only place they encounter God - that must be a prayer priority."

More details at: <https://www.eauk.org/church/pray-with-us/pray-for-schools.cfm>



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## St Briavels' Bread & Cheese Scramble

### A Local Whit Sunday Custom

Every Whit Sunday, bread and cheese is blessed by the vicar and is thrown from the wall for the assembled crowd of Dole Claimers to collect. It supposedly has mysterious preservative properties, presumably because it has been blessed, and pieces are often kept as a lucky charm.

The custom traditionally dates back to twelfth century origins, though written records date back only a couple of hundred years, and until the event became too rowdy it all took place in the churchyard. Before the scramble, a sermon is preached by visiting clergy – and if they get a cheer at the end, they are paid the Whittington Purse so it's good incentive for it to be entertaining!

The money for the charity was left by local landowner William Whittington who died in 1625 (look out for the board in the porch which lists all the good causes he supported) and the sum of £1. 6s. 8d. is awarded for an appreciated Sermon, still in old money. A few hymns and prayers follow the sermon in a brief service held at the church gates, before all move around the corner to gather in front of the very tall Pound Wall.

The custodians of Hudnall's Wood climb onto the top of the wall and shower the waiting crowd below – many catch the bread and cheese in upturned umbrellas. Musical accompaniment is provided by the local band and a barbecue follows the ceremony.





### **Pop-up Pub Night**

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### ***OPENING BEAUTIFUL GARDENS TALK***

Venue: St Matthew's Church, Marstow

Date: Friday May 17<sup>th</sup>

Time: 7.00 p.m.

Tickets: £5.00

Contact: Sue 07971 411020/Phyll 07717 126596

Angela and Graham O'Connell, Assistant County Organisers of the National Garden (Yellow Book) Scheme, will give an illustrated talk about the scheme, its fascinating history, the charities it helps, what goes on behind the scenes, and glorious gardens open in South Herefordshire throughout this year.

Wine and nibbles will be served



# Letter from the Vicar of the fictional Rectory of St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

It never fails to amaze me how, in church life, an issue can suddenly become an Issue. In the last month, we have acquired an Issue: a proposal to convert a space at the back of church into a kitchen. Inevitably, battle lines have been drawn and trenches dug. Attendance at church council meetings has soared and unofficial sub-committees meet in the car park after Services. It's obvious that feelings are running high, because people have become remarkably polite to one another.

Some who are wildly in favour see it as an opportunity of being able to leave the pews ten minutes early, in order to get ready for the rush for weak coffee and damp biscuits. I can already hear in my mind the final hymn being drowned by kettles being filled, biscuit tins opened, cups thunderingly placed on saucers, while the volunteers discuss the dress sense of others in the congregation in deafening whispers.

I was a little surprised to hear that Colonel Wainwright was all in favour – until I realised that it would give him a place to totter into to read his newspaper once he got bored with my sermon, which usually seems to happen in the first minute. Naturally, smaller turf wars have broken out alongside the major battle. There is conflict about whether we should get new crockery, what colour carpeting tiles would look right – and most importantly of all, who will take charge of the coffee rota.

Others are totally against the project: the treasurer dreads the thought of signing yet more cheques, the churchwardens worry about removing pews which have quietly hidden the dry rot, and the theologically angst-ridden agonise about the fact that St Paul never mentioned coffee after Sabbath worship.

Naturally, I encourage all sides, especially if it will bring any possibility of progress to a halt. I proposed bringing in flasks of coffee, thus stopping anyone being able to escape before the end of the Service; I suggested drinks being brought to people in the pews, thus ruining the Colonel's hopes of finding a safe haven; I organised a group to study High Priestly attitudes to refreshments in the Temple in Jerusalem in Leviticus.

I am sure that by the time all these groups have come up with their conclusions, we will have safely moved on to fight the next Issue.

Your loving uncle,

**Eustace**

## PARISH EVENTS AT A GLANCE



### May

- 1st Tretawdy Nature Reserve Volunteer 9.30  
 Community Coffee Morning St Dubricius Whitchurch 10.30  
 Whitchurch Floral Society Old Court Hotel Crafting Workshop 14.00
- 3rd Pop Up Pub & Food Night Garron Centre Llangarron 18.00 - 21.00
- 4th Wyedean Embroiderers St James' Community Hall Wyesham  
 10.30 - 15.00
- 5th Tretawdy Nature Reserve Volunteer 9.30
- 5th & 6th Holiday Teas St Dubricius Whitchurch 14.00-16.00
- 6th Llangrove May Fayre 12 noon -16.00
- 8th Coffee Morning Llangrove Village Hall 10.30
- 9th Board Games Evening West End Marstow 19.00
- 11th Café Bishopswood Village Hall 10.30-Noon  
 Repair Café Llangrove Village Hall 14.00-16.30
- 13th Community Lunch St Dubricius Whitchurch 12.00  
 Wyesham WI St James' Community Hall 19.00
- 15th Community Coffee Morning St Dubricius Whitchurch 10.30
- 17th Opening Beautiful Gardens Talk West End Marstow 19.00
- 18th Community Café Garron Centre Llangarron 10.30 -12.30  
 Llangrove & District Gardening Society Plant Sale & Cream Teas  
 14.00 -16.00
- Village Quiz Night Garron Centre Llangarron 19.00
- Jeremy Huggett & The Chosen 5 Whitchurch & Ganarew Memorial  
 Hall 19.30
- 19th Party on the Green, Wyesham 15.30 - 17.00  
 Quiz Night St James' Community Hall 19.00
- 20th to 26th Wyesham Together Week - various events
- 20th Craft Group St James' Community Hall Wyesham 19.00  
 Marstow Makers Craft Evening, West End Marstow 19.00
- 23rd We are Farming Mind: ACEG Talk Garron Centre 19.00
- 24th Skittles Evening Bishopswood Village Hall 19.30
- 25th Community Coffee Morning St James' Church Wyesham 10.00

- 26th & 27th Holiday Teas St Dubricius Whitchurch 14.00-16.00
- 27th Community Lunch St Dubricius Whitchurch 12.00
- 30th The Taste of Things Flicks in the Sticks Goodrich Village Hall 19.00

