



Stour Vale Benefice

Seven Churches, One Body, One Benefice

Newsletter No. 301

Sunday 1st February

10:00am Morning Worship West Stour (CW)

11:00am Parish Communion East Stour

Important notice:

Please note that Todber's church will be closed and services suspended while essential roof repairs are carried out.

Please remember all who are ill or bereaved in Sunday's intercessions and in your prayers this week

All who are ill, especially Joyce (ES), Richard (ES), Irene (KM), Peter (KM), Nicky (T), Margaret (WS) and Tony (WS); for the family and friends of Jim White (BW), John Score (KM), Jeremy Seavers (T), Maureen Richards (formerly SP) and all those who are bereaved.

Other Benefice services/events coming up in February

Every Wednesday – Said Holy Communion 10:30am East Stour Church

Every Tuesday during Lent – Morning Prayer West Stour 9:30am

Monday 16th – Knit and Natter 2:30pm East Stour Village Hall

Wednesday 18th – Ash Wednesday Communion Service at East Stour 10:30am

Tuesday 24th – Benefice Lunch 12:30pm Lakeside Kitchen

Friday 27th – Stour Vale Benefice prayer Group 2pm East Stour Church



Readings Sunday 1st February *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*

Malachi 3.1–5

Psalm 24.

Hebrews 2.14–end

Luke 2.22–40

Hebrews 2.14–end (NIV)

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. ¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Luke 2.22–40 (NIV)

When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to

him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel."

³³ The child's father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.

³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

Collect and Post Communion for Sunday 1st February

Collect

Almighty and ever-living God,
clothed in majesty,
whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple,
in substance of our flesh:
grant that we may be presented to you
with pure and clean hearts,
by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna,
who lived to welcome the Messiah:
may we, who have received these gifts beyond words,
prepare to meet Christ Jesus
when he comes to bring us to eternal life;
for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

Prayer in the Benefice – Sunday 1st to Saturday 7th February

As the poet Tennyson said, 'more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.' This week the suggested 'prayers' are deliberately ambiguous. You can pray them as they stand, allowing God to use those prayers for his will as he chooses, or you can pray for situations and people that come to mind as you read them, trusting the Holy Spirit to guide those inspirations to where your prayers are most needed.

As always, please remember the people on the first page of the newsletter we have specifically been asked to pray for. If you would like us to pray for something, or someone, then please contact Jill Perry (octavoeditorsvb@gmail.com).

Sunday:

Almighty God, we thank you for your Holy Word. May it be a lantern to our feet, a light to our paths and a strength in our lives.



Monday:

God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or imagine, according to the power that works within us.

Tuesday:

The best prayer is to rest in the goodness of God knowing that goodness can reach right down to our lowest depths of need (*Julian of Norwich*)



Wednesday:

Happy are those who work for peace. God will call them his children (*Matthew 5:9*)

Thursday:

Lord, the sea is so large and my boat is so small. (*Prayer of the Breton Fishermen*)

Friday:

Just think, you're not here by chance but by God's choosing. His hand has formed you and made you the person you are. He has allowed you to be here at this time in history to fulfil his special purpose for this generation.



Saturday:

'For all that has been – 'Thanks!' For all that shall be – 'Yes!'
(*Dag Hammarskjöld*)

Late February sees the beginning of Lent. It is the time of year when the Church encourages people to take spiritual stock of themselves, and to seek a deeper commitment to God. You may find these observations helpful.

Still water and still religion freeze the quickest. - *Anon*

Christianity is the total commitment of all I know of me to all I know of Jesus Christ. - *William Temple*

Every action of our lives touches on some chord that will vibrate in eternity. - *E H Chapin*

It is dangerously possible for activity to be no more than a dizzy whirl around a central emptiness. - *Anon*

God would not rub so hard, were it not to fetch out the dirt and spots that be in His people. - *Thomas Brooks*

It is not great talents that God blesses, so much as great likeness to Jesus. - *Robert Murray M'Cheyne*

No man ever said, at the end of his days, 'I have read my Bible too much, I have thought of God too much, I have prayed too much, I have been too careful with my soul.' - *J C Ryle*

Nature forms us; sin deforms us; school informs us; Christ transforms us. - *Anon*

It costs to follow Jesus Christ, but it costs more not to. - *Anon*

If God brings you to it, He will bring you through it. -Anon

Happy moments, praise God.
Difficult moments, seek God.
Quiet moments, worship God.
Painful moments, trust God.
Every moment, thank God.

- Anon

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and love your neighbour as yourself.' - *Jesus Christ*

Parish Pump

Smile Lines

The Rules of Marriage

Here are the real-life answers from a group of children:

Question: What do you think your Mum and Dad have in common?

Both don't want any more kids. - Lori, age 8

Question: What do most people do on a date?

Dates are for having fun, and people should use them to get to know each other. Even boys have something to say if you listen long enough. - Lynnette, age 8

On the first date, they just tell each other lies and that usually gets them interested enough to go for a second. - Martin, age 10

Question: When is it okay to kiss someone?

When they're rich. - Pam, age 7

The law says you have to be eighteen, so I wouldn't want to mess with that. - Curt, age 7

The rule goes like this: If you kiss someone, then you should marry them and have kids with them. It's the right thing to do. - Howard, age 8

And the #1 Favourite is.....

Question: How would you make a marriage work?

Always tell your wife that she looks pretty, even if she looks like a train wreck - Ricky, age 10
From Parish Pump

You can contact Revd Clare on: 01747 838171

Or by email: clare@evzone.co.uk

Please Note: Mondays are Clare's usual day off and she will also be on leave
Saturday 31st January.



This Newsletter



We hope you find this newsletter helpful. If you know of anyone who would like to join the mailing list, tell them to send their name, parish and email address to Jill Perry at octavoeditorsvb@googlemail.com with the subject "Newsletter Mailing List". But, if you do not wish to continue receiving them, please email her with "Unsubscribe" in the subject field.

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Newsletter produced on behalf of the Stour Vale Benefice:
Buckhorn Weston – East Stour – Fifehead Magdalen
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