

The Parish of Freshford with Limpley Stoke and Hinton Charterhouse – Newsletter – February 2026

A message from the Rector

The year is underway... it's February already!

Greetings. It is good to be in February. Mind you, to me January did not seem as long as we thought it would be... very wet, but not too cold and miserable. And Pat and I are loving the snowdrops – we have never seen so many – signs of new growth, fresh starts and Spring a bit nearer - so encouraging.

And from this haven we look at a world that is busy, and moving fast. In addition to our personal ups and downs, we cannot avoid seeing and hearing of horrors – natural and man-made, injustices on our TV screens, and truth distorted by leaders who intentionally spin the tales they want us to believe. They seem to forget that we can see the videos and make our own observations. It is difficult to understand where it is all going, and to find hope.



Freshford and its church from the West

At the end of January, I held an away-day for the Parochial Church Council - the charitable body (under Church of England governance) that oversees the work of the churches in our parish. I have been here as the Rector now for 6 months and I wanted to propose a 5-year plan – “2031 - from maintenance to mission”. We had a stimulating day. There are 4 main aims:

To be a growing Christian community, with pastoral care accessible to all, constructive and trusted engagement to support the school, and known care for the farming community.

To be financially sustainable - paying our way, not reliant on reserves, and supporting Christian mission.

To be missional in activity, modelled on seeking *unity, practicing compassion and a habit of prayer*, known for community involvement, inclusive and welcoming to all, and offering teaching and guidance to those exploring faith. The exciting appointment of Archbishop Sarah Mullaly will help this outward focus, please God.

To be more connected across the A36 – supporting our one congregation and community with its three unique churches. Can we open the tunnel under the A36?

Our immediate need is to address a financial shortfall – the gap between our annual **income** and the **outgoings** that 1) keep our churches open, warm and functioning, and 2) pay the diocese to support others. At the time of writing this is around £20,000. We are going to launch a gift day at the end of March. More details next month.

I end with a prayer verse from St Paul's great letter to the Romans (Chapter 15, verse 13):

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” in Jesus' name we pray, AMEN

Revd Prebendary Nigel Rawlinson

News from St Peter's

Thank You Tea

A reminder to join us on Thursday 12th February at 3pm in the Old Bakery for a thank you tea for all of you who volunteer on our many rotas at St Peter's. This includes clock winders, church unlockers and lockers, cleaning team, flower arrangers, welcomers and readers, coffee servers and last, but not least, Roger our organist! Hope I haven't missed anyone!

Please come and join us for cake, tea and bubbly! Please reply if you can make it so I have an idea how many to cater for. *Debbie*

News from St Mary's

On Sunday 1st February Archdeacon Charlie Peer visited, preached and led our monthly service of BCP communion.

On Monday 9th there is a thank you tea for all who volunteer at St Mary's. This will be in the Old Bakery, starting at 2.30.

News from St John's

We welcomed the New Year with a Communion service led by Nigel on 4th January. On the four Tuesdays in January at 5.30pm Nigel has led a short service of Evening Prayer at 4 The Glebe which is considerably warmer than St John's! We will revert to church when the weather warms up. We have discovered something rather special about sitting in a circle rather than pews.

On the 1st February Archdeacon Charlie Peer visited, preached and led our communion service. In his sermon on the wedding miracle in Cana (John 2: 1-11) he asked which was the more extraordinary – that Jesus the Son of God lived on earth for 30 years doing good things, or that water was changed into wine?

Willie and Tommy Sturges are about to start repairing the gaping hole in the kitchen ceiling - we are grateful for their help. That should stop the wind whistling round us when we make the coffee. *Liz*

News from the School

Our school team continues to support collective worship each week. They are focusing on the Fruits of the Spirit such as love, joy, peace and patience. Each week, the children add one of two pictures of golden apples to our specially made "Love in Action" book. The apples identify acts of kindness, etc that various children have shown to others during the week.

At the beginning of February, we are looking forward to holding a special school Candlemas service in St Peter's Church - a first for us! *Penny*

Bible Study

St Peter's Freshford

Thursday Morning 10.30 - 12.00

Tom Wright has written an excellent study guide on the Book of Romans – Paul's great letter about the Christian faith. Please join us.

Services

3rd February 5.30	Liz's house, Hinton Charterhouse	Evening prayer
8th February 10.30	St Peter's, Freshford	Common Worship Holy Communion
10 th February 5.30	Liz's house, Hinton Charterhouse	Evening prayer
15 th February 10.30	St Mary's, Limpley Stoke	Common Worship Holy Communion
17 th February 5.30	Liz's house, Hinton Charterhouse	Evening prayer
18 th February 12.00	Midday Ash Wednesday St Peter's, Freshford	Holy Communion
22 nd February 10.30	St Peter's, Freshford	Common Worship Morning prayer
24 th February 5.30	Liz's house, Hinton Charterhouse	Evening prayer
1 st March 10.30	St John's, Hinton Charterhouse,	Common Worship Holy Communion
1 st March 12.30	St Mary's Limpley Stoke,	BCP Communion

Ladies Wednesday walking group

This year's dates for the walking group are the 11th of February, 11th of March, 8th of April, 13th of May, 10th of June, 8th of July. There won't be a walk in August.

Wednesday afternoons - Tea, cake & chat

Please do come and join us in the Old Bakery on Wednesday afternoons from 2.30 – 4.00 for tea, coffee.

Zoom sessions

If you don't get out much and feel like a chat, a small group of us zoom together for 45 minutes on a Monday morning. To give it a try, please contact Penny Jones on jonespennyg@gmail.com. *Penny*

Need a lift? Think LINK

A reminder that the Limpley Stoke and Freshford LINK service is available to residents in both villages who lack the means to get from A to B. Volunteer drivers will transport you to a doctor's appointment or local hospital, as well as to shopping or social visits. The service includes the delivery of prescriptions from the Galleries for those unable to collect them. If you have a car and some free time, why not consider becoming a LINK driver. Details at freshford.org.uk or you can contact the LINK co-ordinator on 07714 169216.

List of contacts

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