

## **Wye Brooks Group UPDATE for 7 August TRINITY 8 GREEN**

## **TRINITY 8 READINGS**

**Isaiah 1:1,10-20  
Psalm 50.1-8, 23,24  
Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16  
Luke 12:32-40**

### **FROM THE VICAR**

The Lambeth Conference has exposed again the very deep rift in the communion over sex. The very clear majority of the bishops attending hold to a traditional biblically conservative position that the only legitimate sexual activity for a Christian is between husband and wife within marriage. But a minority, almost entirely from developed nations like the US hold that same sex partnerships should be viewed on the same level as traditional partnerships.

What is the thinking behind it? Well first, I suppose, that God is kind. He has given us love and sex it's unthinkable that he wants any of us to miss out on them. All of us are sexual beings and all of us have a desire to be in partnership with someone.

Another part of the thinking is that while it is admitted that parts of the Bible are very against homosexual intercourse (In Leviticus it is described as an abomination and attracts the death penalty) we routinely reject other parts of the Old Testament Law as outdated, like not being able to mix wool and linen, and not being able to eat milk and meat together.

Yet another part of the issue is the meanings of words. In the New Testament, it is argued, that a word describing homosexual sex may actually mean one particular type of sex between men, not all sex.

Yet another is that non-acceptance of homosexuals condemns them to being second class Christians.

But those on the other side say that the Bible is quite clear even if you discount the death penalty, that homosexual sex is not part of God's plan, not accepted in scripture, attracts God's judgment and that persisting in it is apostasy (standing outside the faith) or even rebellion against God.

At the Lambeth Conference some male delegates came with their husbands and caused offence. Others refused even to take communion while homosexual bishops were present.

All this is not really about feelings. It's part of an ongoing battle between conservative and liberal theology and morals, and the divisions will not end soon. One more thing—it matters!

### **(ALTERNATIVE) COLLECT FOR TRINITY 8**

**Lord God,  
your Son left the riches of heaven  
and became poor for our sake:  
when we prosper save us from pride,  
when we are needy save us from despair,  
that we may trust in you alone;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

### **SNIPPETS JOHN BUNYAN 1628-88**

John Bunyan wrote *the Pilgrim's Progress* and the hymn *Who would true valour see*. He had a tough life.

He became a lay preacher in the army at sixteen and his best friend was killed standing next to him. When he was seventeen his mother died. He married at twenty one, but six years later his wife died, leaving him with four young children, one of whom was blind. At thirty two he was jailed for preaching without a government licence and his second wife suddenly went into labour and gave birth to a child who died almost straight away.

He was offered his freedom if he would stop preaching the gospel but his reply was, "If I am freed today I will preach tomorrow."

He spent twelve years in prison for his faith. Despite his hard life he wrote and preached faithfully of God's grace.

### **MORE CHRISTIAN WISDOM ON SEX**

We are not all weak in the same way, nor are we all strong at the same time. . . . Being "authentic" is not an end in itself. Satan is glad for people to talk openly about their sin—so long as they make no strides toward repentance.

Kill your love for sin, or sin will kill your love for God.

*Both quotes by Garrett Kell in his book  
Pure in Heart: Sexual Sin and the Promises of God*

# CHRISTIANITY IN THE NEWS

## THE QUEEN WRITES TO THE LAMBETH BISHOPS



As the head of the Church of England, the Queen has sent a message to those attending the Lambeth

Conference, reminding bishops of the "great need of God - in love and deed" following the pandemic.

She released her open letter today as issues surrounding climate change are top of the agenda. Her Majesty is a proud environmentalist; the passion is echoed by the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge. After some words about the environment and climate change, her Majesty said in the letter

"Throughout my life, the message and teachings of Christ have been my guide and in them I find hope. It is my heartfelt prayer that you will continue to be sustained by your faith in times of trial and encouraged by hope at times of despair.

"I send my warmest good wishes to you all for a successful Conference and may God bless you in your ministry and service in his world."

## COLDPLAY SERMONS IN CHURCH



In a bid to get young music fans listening to the gospel, a church in London has combined their sermons with Coldplay's greatest

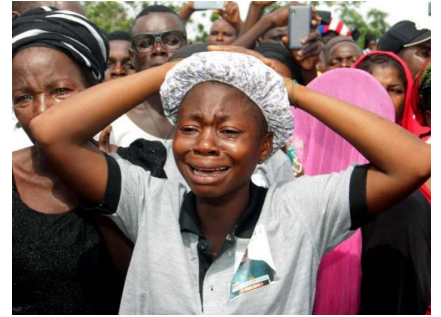
hits.

St Paul's Hammersmith welcomed congregations to engage with a new Bible plan titled "Higher Power: What Coldplay and theology have in common."

The sermons were twinned with a Coldplay song, many of which relay similar sentiments to the Bible

Rev Pete Wynter from St Paul's Hammersmith, told Premier: "Some of the band, I think, have got something of Christianity in their background, even if they're not necessarily pursuing that right now, and many of their songs kind of overlap. "

## NIGERIA CHRISTIANS AND JIHAD



Extremist groups are specifically targeting Christians in Nigeria.

This is according to new research by the Observatory for Religious Freedom in Africa (ORFA), which has revealed Christians are between seven to ten times more likely to be killed than Muslims per capita by jihadist groups.

For Open Doors' director of advocacy & public affairs in UK and Ireland, Dr David Landrum these figures are just "the tip of the iceberg."

Christians were also 59 times more likely to be abducted than Muslims by extremists between 2019 and 2020 per capita, with the number dropping to 4.1 times more between 2020 and 2021.

## DIGITAL RELIGION MAKES FAITH EXPERIENCE RICHER



A study in the US and Canada has found that for 18-35 year olds engaging with digital religion has made their faith experience richer, while some who don't go to church have found religion in digital spaces.

Professor Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme, author of the study, reported that 29% of Canadians and 41% of American people of that age group they consume religious or spiritual digital content at least once a month.

She added "We know that more and more people are turning toward digital mediums for spirituality such as chat groups with pastors, online sermons and religious content on social media, "...We've found that while digital religion isn't necessarily attracting a lot of new millennials to participate, it is making the experience of those already involved richer."

*Mmm! I wonder what the picture is in the UK.*

## WHITCHURCH WEEKLY



10.30 every Thursday at St Dubricius Church, Whitchurch

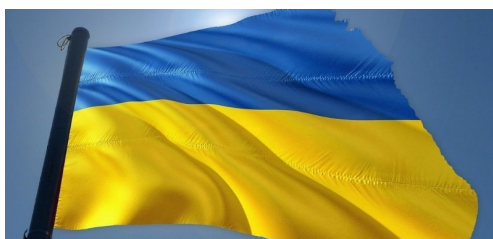
A simple informal half hour communion without a sermon or a collection.

Followed by a cuppa and biscuits.

It has always been open to anyone from both the Wye Reaches and Wye Brooks benefices.

Please do come. Relax and enjoy God's presence with us.

## RESPONDING TO THE UKRAINE CRISIS



The Diocese has a web page encouraging us to respond in prayer and action to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. Go to <https://www.hereford.anglican.org/our-faith/prayers-for-ukraine/>

## UKRAINE FOOD COLLECTION

Tinned food is being collected at KTS Craft Warehouse, Trenchard Street, at the bottom of Edde Cross Street in Ross. They have already made deliveries of clothing and medical equipment, and now it is tinned food which is needed, (no glass). Tins - soup, spaghetti, pies, meat, fruit, plus cereal bars.

## JUST TO DELIGHT YOU

FLASH MOB—Jupiter

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3cpOrB1GW8>

## MINI BIBLE STUDY DEALING WITH DOUBT (1)

Sometimes we can feel very strong in our faith and confident in our beliefs. Yet, at other moments, we can find ourselves questioning or doubting everything we believe. Sometimes it only takes a comment by someone and doubt creeps in.

### Understanding Doubt

What is doubt? To answer this, first understand that there are two different kinds of doubt. Look up the verses below and then describe what kind of doubt you see described:

**John 12:37** - Unwillingness to believe even in face of overwhelming evidence. A hard hearted refusal to believe.

**Mark 9:23-24** - "Shaky" faith, wanting to believe but having trouble with doubts or unanswered question we may have.

Describe the differences you see between the two: The first hardens us to the things of God and is a long-term rejection. The second causes us to search more deeply and is often temporary.

### What to Do with Doubt

At times, trusting what God tells us is not always easy. The big question is what we will do with our doubt. Will we allow doubt to turn us away from God, or allow it to cause us to search out the things of God more deeply? Notice how doubt was handled in the following passages.

How did Abraham respond to God in **Genesis 17:15-23**? He laughed at what God said. Then after thinking it through, he listened to God and did what God asked of him.

What did John the Baptist do when he had some doubt (**Matt. 11:2-3**)? When he had questions, he sent people to talk to Jesus. He searched for answers to the questions he had. Notice that even these godly people had doubts.

Having questions does not make a person bad. If we will take our questions to God in prayer, He will give us the answers we look for!

## SERVICES CALENDAR FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS

Date	Time	Place	Service	Leader
7th August	8.30	Welsh Newton	Meditation and Bible Study	Sue
7th August	11.00	Llangarron	Benefice Holy Communion	Ben
7th August	4.30pm	Llangrove	Evening service	Lay led
14th August	8.30	Welsh Newton	Benefice Holy Communion	Sue
14th August	10.00	Marstow	Benefice Holy Communion	Ben
14th August	11.00	Goodrich	Morning service	Lay led
Sun 21st August	8.30	Welsh Newton	Meditation and Bible Study	Lay led
Sun 21st August	10.00	Llangrove	Benefice Holy Communion	Ben
Sun 21st August	6.00	Llangarron	Evening Prayer	Penny
Sun 28 August	10.00	Marstow	Morning Service	Lay led
Sun 28 August	11.00	Goodrich	Benefice Holy Communion	TBA
Sun 28 August	6.00	Welsh Newton	Village Service	Lay led
Sun 4 September	8.30	Welsh Newton	Meditation and Bible Study	Sue
Sun 4 September	11.00	Llangarron	Benefice Holy Communion	TBA
Sun 4 September	4.30pm	Llangrove	Evening service	Lay led

### THIS WEEK'S LIGHT BITE AND BISHOP'S MESSAGE

Our Light Bite today is the second in a series—on big words within Christianity. Last week's was about God, and for those who missed it (we had a technical issue) you can find it on [youtube.com/watch?v=4Awxsx-B0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Awxsx-B0s)

This week's is about Christ/Messiah/Anointed One. Go to <https://youtu.be/5nBNiKYDiEQ>

**The Bishop's message will not happen during the month of August.**

### WEEKDAY GROUPS

**House Group: Tuesday 10.00am**

The group has chosen to walk through the gospel of Luke, and this week we'll be continuing to look at the temptations of Jesus, as seen through Luke's eyes.

**Prayer Group Tuesday 7.30pm**

A short but precious time together, with the opportunity to pray for the world, the church and people.



## LIGHT BITES

For anyone who hasn't tumbled to it yet, a *Light Bite* is a home produced 'event' of about 20 minutes on YouTube. It will consist usually of an introduction, a bible reading, a talk a hymn and a blessing. They are supposed to TEACH something about our faith or CHALLENGE us.

### LIGHT BITE THEMES

7th August Big Bible words (2)

14th August Big Bible words (3)

21st August Big Bible words (4)

Today we are on the second in a series on Bible words—the words that are difficult to understand.

### THIS WEEK'S LIGHT BITE

Christ/Messiah/Anointed One

## JARGON BUSTER

### CREED

The word Creed is from a Latin word *credo* which means *I believe*, though originally the word *symbolum* (symbol) was used. Outside church it tends to refer to a religion, for example "Whatever a person's race, colour or creed, he has rights."

In Church it means a *formal statement of belief* basically a formal summary of what we believe. There are three main ones.

### THE APOSTLES' CREED

This is the shorter creed, used usually in the Church of England in non-eucharistic services. It begins *I believe in God, the Father almighty*.

No-one knows for certain where this Creed originated. According to Wikipedia 5th century Gaul is most likely, but it would have been based on something older.

### THE NICENE CREED

This begins *We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty*. It's the one we use at Communion. It seems to have been adopted by the Council of Nicaea in 325a.d., and then modified later.

### THE ATHANASIAN CREED

You'll find this in the Book of Common Prayer. It's called Quicunque Vult and is a longer creed which has been used since the sixth century. It is used mainly in the Roman Catholic Church, but hardly ever in the Church of England.

## PRAYER FOR OTHERS

### The UK

- HM the Queen her health and wellbeing
- The parliamentary leadership race
- Rising prices and the hardship they bring
- The increasingly important work of food banks.

### World

Please continue to pray for the Ukraine, and for Russia

Pray for China and Taiwan. This situation is worrying

Pray for the US. The political chaos is severe. There is anger at the Roe vs Wade decision, but gun rights and the continued fallout from the last presidential elections continue to split the country.

Pray for Afghanistan, still in turmoil

Pray too about the famine in East Africa, the migrant problem, threats from nations like North Korea and so on.

### Covid.

- Covid is still with us, though appears to be losing ground.
- Those who have lost loved ones or watched them suffer.
- Those who continue to be isolated
- Our NHS

### Our churches and clergy

- The end of the Lambeth conference and the very stark difference between bishops across the world over human sexuality.
- For right actions leading to sustainability and growth.
- For the prayer life of our churches
- For the hard decisions which will need to be made about clergy numbers.
- For mission mindedness

### Our villages

Our pubs, parish councils, local businesses and schools. Pray for all our communities in these difficult times.

### Pray for people

Please pray for all those you know who are sick or in particular need.

Annie—medical issues following the birth of a child, with treatment ongoing.

Mike and Anne. Neither of them is very well.

Chris, now back home and slowly recovering, but very weak.

Ruth (not Ruth Davis) undergoing stem cell treatment.

Gill, getting over Covid

Pray for the family of 22 year old Ethan Kimberley, whose funeral happened recently.

Robert and Jessica: they marry next Saturday

# REGULARS

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE—WILLS



Want to make a difference to your local church? Why not leave it something in your will? It's easy to do, and helps what you care about.

## COMPANION WORK NEEDED

One of our parishioners would like to find paid work as a companion to someone—cooking, housekeeping, shopping etc. If you or someone you know might be able to offer this kind of work, please ring me (01989 770454) and I'll put you in touch.

## PARISH GIVING SCHEME

We are pushing the Parish Giving Scheme because it is the best way of giving to your Church, not just because of *how little hassle* it is to you, but also because of how *safe* and *tax efficient* it is, how *easy it is for treasurers to administer* and how it usually does actually *drive the income of churches up*. And GOOD NEWS—you don't even have to fill in a form. You can set it up by phone. By all means ring your church treasurer for details and fill in a form, or call the number below.

## PARISH GIVING SCHEME

Tel 0333 002 1271

Church	<u>Parish Ref</u>	Church	<u>Parish Ref</u>
Goodrich	180618231	Marstow	180618241
Llangarron	180618239	Llangrove	180618240
Welsh Newton	180618256		

## CONTACT

Revd Philip 'Ben' Bentham

Tel 01989 770454

Email [benbentham@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:benbentham@yahoo.co.uk)

If you have suggestions for improving this Update, please do let me know.

## CLERGY HOLIDAYS

23 August to 6 September  
25 October to 6 November  
26–31 December.

## CLERGY DAY OFF

My usual day off is MONDAY



The Llangrove Milk Shed at the Village Hall,  
For farm fresh milk and a few other things like butter, cheese and cake.

Support local businesses!



Our local eateries are important, and without our patronage they risk not being able to survive, especially in this climate.

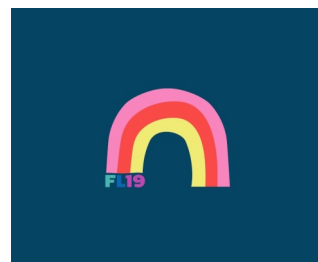
**Llangrove - The Royal Arms**  
Phone **01989 770267**

**Goodrich - The Hostellerie**  
Phone **01600 890241**

**Goodrich - The Cross Keys**  
Phone **01600 890692**

## BLESS THE NHS

Thanks to Helen Shipton, who belongs to our Tuesday prayer group, for giving us details of this initiative to provide a bit of support for NHS workers. Do have a look.



<https://www.frontline19.com/hopeline19/>